



GRAIL

JUNE, 1945

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THE GRAIL

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H. C. McGinnis

BETWEEN THE LINES

H. C. McGinnis

Personal God

an absentee God. It is a denatured Christianity which believes in a God Who, having created the world and reserving the right to end it, leaves mankind totally to its own devices and destiny. It seemingly entirely forgets that, as Pope Leo XIII said in *Libertas Humana*: "The Redeemer of mankind, Jesus Christ, having restored and exalted the original dignity of nature, vouchsafed special assistance to the will of man; and by the gifts of His grace here, and the promise of heavenly bliss hereafter, He raised it to a nobler state."

Although people talk frequently of a Christian pattern of society to follow the military victory, we must, if we are to make sure that the fruits of victory will be secure to us and to our children, insist that this pattern be the true Christian pattern and not a deistic conception of God. Agnostics wonder why the present catastrophe, following so closely upon World War I, could happen in that part of the world which is generally labeled *Christian*. It appears to them that in nineteen centuries in which to mold society, Christianity has failed to produce what it takes. However, we must make sharp distinctions between Deism and Christianity, for everything called Christian is not necessarily that. Many who openly profess Christianity and who sincerely believe they are following the true Christian concept of man's existence are victims of deistic doctrines. These doctrines acknowledge that God is the Creator, the Prime Cause. They hold that, once creation was effected, the Creator withdrew Himself, generally speaking, leaving the operation of the world and of mankind to certain laws which He had established. They

deny God's personal interest in each and every individual; hence their feelings toward God are, at the best, little more than respect, instead of worship, adoration and personal trust. They contend that man's intelligence and ability are superior to God's grace. In fact, many of them do not believe in grace at all, or else give only lip service to its existence. When man gives his Creator no more than a very deep respect and possibly a profound admiration, feeling no necessity to publicly praise, adore and worship Him, and having no sense of a direct personal relationship with Him, he naturally sees no more reason for going to church or to any form of public worship than he would for going to a public lecture on secular ethics. For a sermon on behavior is all he can logically expect to get out of the service. The extent of this Deism which passes so often for Christianity may be judged by the unchurched condition of from 60% to 70% of our nation's people. The overwhelming majority of these unchurched are not anti-God: they simply have fallen victim to the deistic conception of God. When man loses his contact with a personal God, it is but a step until he accepts Deism with its absentee God and from there, he progresses into utter paganism.

DEISM had its beginnings in England in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Locke, Shaftesbury, and Toland were its principal exponents and it was Deism that started Voltaire on his destructive course. The movement became the most advanced form of Liberalism in religion and soon spread to Germany, where it was largely instrumental in produc-

TODAY'S world seeks a new birth of freedom. Millions of lives have been laid on Freedom's altar as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse search out their victims, even in the remote corners of the world. The freedom we seek is all-inclusive, not freedom for certain races, colors or creeds or favored nations. It is, or should be, a freedom for every last one of God's earthly children. Yet despite the tremendous sacrifices which have been made for it, it will not come with military victory alone. Its real birth and proper rearing to maturity still lie ahead. Unless its early training points it to the proper objectives and, equally important, it is taught the proper methods to achieve them, it will not be what a miserable world so desperately seeks.

A new birth of freedom, as Lincoln said, must be "under God." Lincoln meant a personal God, a very personal God. He openly admitted that often, when the problems of his nation's most trying days became too much for him, he sank to his knees in prayer, seeking strength and guidance from God. Unfortunately a great part of that world which calls itself Christian believes in Deism, in

ing that type of German philosophy which has finally brought that once prosperous and happy people to its knees in ruin and misery. In France it became the spear-head of that political, economic and social Liberalism which came out of the French Revolution and finally, infiltrating insidiously into the United States, it quickly vitiated the American way of life as conceived by the nation's Founding Fathers. In its train followed Monopolism and all its oppressions of the weak, poor and helpless and a rank Materialism which soon became the guiding code of millions, regardless of economic and social standing. Protestantism became its natural prey, for many Protestant sects fail to provide their adherents with a ritual containing frequent and varied means of contacting God, the creeds of some being little more than moral codes. Before long, Deism's victims lose the proper perspective of freedom, of human liberty, and of man's responsibility to God for his correct social attitudes and behavior. Under Deism, man is very prone to forget entirely St. Paul's warning to the Romans that "There is no power but from God." He forgets that the individual dignity which he would protect cannot have, as Pius XII warns in his latest Christmas message, "any other origin than in a personal God, our Creator," and that "it follows that the dignity of man is the dignity of the moral community willed by God," and that "the dignity of political authority is the dignity deriving from its sharing in authority with God." Continued the Holy Father: "Only a clear appreciation of the purposes assigned by God to every human society, joined to a deep sense of the exalted duties of social activity, can put those in power in a position to fulfill their own obligations in the legislative, judicial and executive order with that objectivity, impartiality, loyalty, generosity and integrity without which a democratic government would find it hard to command the respect and the support of the better section of the people." With this interpretation of man's responsibility to a personal God in mind, it should not be difficult for us to see clearly why man's free-

dom and dignity get such a tossing-around these days when we once realize the extent of deistic thinking among millions of people who heatedly insist they are Christians.

The imprint of Deism has been strongly stamped upon the modern conception of liberty and freedom. Pope Leo XIII warned of the fallacies of this newer conception in 1888 when he wrote in *Human Liberty*: "We have on other occasions, and especially in Our Encyclical Letter *Immortale Dei*, in treating of the so-called *modern liberties*, distinguished between their good and evil elements; and We have shown that whatsoever is good in those liberties is as ancient as truth itself, and that the Church has always most willingly approved and practiced that good: but whatsoever has been added as new is, to tell the plain truth, of a vitiated kind, the fruit of the disorders of the age, and of an insatiate longing after novelties. Seeing, however, that many cling so obstinately to their own opinion in this matter as to imagine these modern liberties, cankered as they are, to be the greatest glory of our age, and the very basis of civil life, without which no perfect government can be conceived, we feel it a pressing duty, for the sake of the common good, to treat separately of this subject.

"It is with *moral liberty*, whether in individuals or in communities, that We proceed at once to deal. But, first of all, it will be well to speak first of *natural liberty*; for, though it is distinct and separate from moral liberty, natural freedom is the fountain-head from which liberty of whatsoever kind flows. . . . The unanimous consent of judgment of men, which is the trusty voice of nature, recognizes this natural liberty in those only who are endowed with intelligence or reason; and it is by his use of this that man is rightly regarded as responsible for his actions. . . . Reason sees that whatever things that are held to be good upon earth, may exist or may not, and discerning that none of them are of necessity for us, it leaves the will free to choose what it pleases. But man can judge of this contingency, as We say, only because he has a soul that is simple, spiritual, and in-

tellectual—a soul, therefore, which is not produced by matter, and does not depend on matter for its existence; but which is created immediately by God, and, far surpassing the condition of things material, has a life and action of its own. . . . When, therefore, it is established that man's soul is immortal and endowed with reason and not bound up with things material, the foundation of natural liberty is at once firmly laid."

The above statement of Christian belief is the direct antithesis of that of those who would found peace and true freedom upon Deism's absentee God Who has no immediate interest in the souls He creates. Yet even the followers of this idea of the supremacy of mortal man over divine grace are the most anxious to place their trust in leaders who subscribe most devotedly to a personal God and who admit their responsibility to Him. A most excellent example is the reaction which followed President Truman's first message to the people through their Congress. The nation had been properly alarmed by the sudden death of its wartime President who had done so much to plan the future. Even his political opponents felt a sense of devastating loss. Millions wondered if his successor would take hold properly and thus prevent the fruits of victory from being lost. But the straining ears of observers heard an almost audible sigh of relief and confidence come immediately from the listening public when it perceived its new President's deep spirituality, his dependence upon a personal God, and his prayer that "I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and of my people."

The American nation, even though more than one-half unchurched, felt a strong surge of confidence in the man who holds himself responsible to his God. Make no mistake: people always trust a man who holds himself strictly accountable to a personal God for his public and private acts. Let this, then, be our clue in shaping the new world pattern we so desperately desire: society will head for its proper destiny when enough of its members are devoted to serving a personal God.

ATHEISM

IN THE GRADES

Raymond McGinnis, S.T.L., M.A.

"Not to know the true God is the worst of calamities for a State. Whoever attacks faith does not love his country, as atheism is the ruin of the State."

—Plato

HOW many here do not believe in God? Seven hands were raised—two or three with just a little hesitation. How many do believe in God? Four hands bravely shoved themselves upward. Seven out of eleven claiming or pretending to be atheists! The group of hand-raisers were seven and eighth grade pupils. Perhaps, the reader can sympathize with my rather shocked feeling. Had the students been on the secular college level where according to Dr. Luba's study made at California University over fifty percent of the professors are admitted atheists it might not have been so startling. In three years of catechetics I had never run into anything like this. But let me explain.

For two years I had been assigned to teach christian doctrine on the release time plan at an exclusive private school. To be admitted to the school as a pupil required an invitation from the school itself; thus only the "elite," especially from the financial viewpoint, could hope to obtain admittance to this last word in progressive and democratic institutions. However, the school officials at the request of certain Catholic parents made it possible for several catechists to give instructions one period a week to the Catholic boys attending. For this good will I assure you we catechists were most grateful—even with rationed time.

It all began in this way. One afternoon the boys in my class (they were on the secondary level) brought up the subject of evolution and the origin of life. After indicating certain distinctions to be made as theistic and atheistic, organic and inorganic evolution, I pointed out that to date the missing link had not been discovered (the Piltdown, Peking, Heidelberg and other such candidates do not re-

ceive sufficient scientific approval) and that from a purely scientific viewpoint anthropological exigential and even non-exigential transformism was unacceptable. As for the origin of life, the only sane attitude was special creation. Abiogenesis while not disproven as a principle by Pasteur was, nevertheless, shown to be in the present state of the world untenable. Only the scientist starting from an aprioristic denial of God and providence could logically reject special creationism. It was true some scientists rather than accept the existence of God and creationism clung to the unfounded hypothesis of spontaneous generation. From the manner in which the boys reacted it was clear they had been led to believe that evolution and science had in some way done away with the idea or fact of God. When they proceeded to bring in Haeckel's ontogeny as the recapitulation of phylogeny, it became more clear that someone was teaching recklessly. The boys had seemingly been taught that this theory was wholly true—no distinctions, no reservations made at all. They had not been told of Professor Hiss' exposition of Haeckel's unscientific methods and deliberate chicanery nor that the famous embryological cleavages were phyrangeal in character, that these cleavages did not prove man to have once been a fish. After some time and cross quizzing the boys seemed relieved—one even exultant.

But the affair had only begun. About the middle of the week I received a call from one of the school's professors, a young man just out of college, who taught history, and, as I had learned from some of the Catholic boys who attended his classes, not with an exactly pro-Catholic bias. He told me that one of my pupils, the exultant one, since my last class had been in quite a few arguments. And as Professor X (I conceal his name for evident reasons) said, "he had not fared too well." "Would I be so kind as to come out some evening for dinner and discuss the matter." I replied that cir-

cumstances, viz, regulations, made it impossible to accept, but that if the boys wished to discuss the matter they would be most welcome to attend my next class. Professor X assured me warmly that he would be present with some of the boys.

The next week came. Due to circumstances the Catholic boys were unable to be present. But Professor X had been true to his promise; he was there with his seventh and eighth grade history class. From the general feel in the air it was clear that Father was supposed to be on the spot. Before opening what turned out to be a sort of quiz program I decided to make an experiment. I had all non-Catholic boys before me; all had been taught by Professor X. So I inaugurated the session with the question, "How many here do not believe in God?" The response of seven hands was not quite what I had anticipated. For even though the greater number may not have realized fully the import of what they were doing, yet it was painfully indicative of the type of coaching they were receiving from somewhere. Two thoughts flashed through my mind—is this the supposed ultimate in progressive democratic education; do Catholic parents send their own flesh and blood to such an environment? After a few further questions it was all too evident that the boys were talking over their heads and mostly repeating objections either given them by Professors X or suggested by the system. I shall give the reader a few examples.

"Sir, does not science disprove the story of the six days creation?" They were surprised when I agreed that science had shown that the world seems not to have been the work of six twenty-four-hour days. After giving the more accepted explanation of Genesis's creation narration, I explained the term "yom." Professor X had evidently not prepared his boys for this viewpoint. One of the most unpleasant questions (unpleasant because of the cynical tone in which presented) came from a bright looking young lad. "Now, sir," he said, "I never held for the idea of God as a king sitting on a golden throne atop a cloud. Maybe God exists; maybe he doesn't. I do not know. But, sir, why do we pray to him? ...to sort of make Him feel good?" Here was, indeed, a pretty speech for an eighth grader. Then, it was with some difficulty I explained to one lad that though God was everywhere, even in him by power, knowledge, and essence, nevertheless, he did not hit God when he struck himself. One boy passed on Professor X's favorite objection to God's existence. "Can God, since He is all powerful, make a stone so large that He himself cannot lift it?" I knew this question

originated from Professor X, since some of my Catholic boys told me how he had presented it to them in History class. Hence, the Professor seemed just a little uneasy when I remarked that the objection was a very ancient and trite one and that the good Professor as a student of Medieval History would doubtless remember the magnificent treatment given to this very question by the thirteenth century philosopher, Thomas of Aquin. There were many other questions along the same line—most of them starting with that talismanic preface... "Sir, does not science..." One thing that was also clear was that many of the young lads were honestly troubled; their young minds seemed to be terribly bewildered by the vast clutter of opposing and contradictory views they were getting.

Later I learned from a member on the faculty that Professor X was an avowed atheist. I inquired, "Do they permit atheists to teach here?" He responded, "Oh, there is only one." And what conclusions may we draw from this school let us now ask ourselves. There are many. Not that this school for upper class children is atheistic; no, there was only one atheist on the faculty and that we Catholic catechists were allowed to have a short period each week to try and instill some religion into our own boys indicates rather the broad liberalist attitude. Professor X was broad-minded enough to bring his non-Catholic pupils into my class to hear the other side of the question—at least for one hour of their young lives. Then, too, as the Head Master remarked to me the first day, "I think something like this is very helpful in times like these." One wonders if the Head Master, who keeps an atheist on the faculty with himself, meant that in times of war one should use religion merely as a stimulus to the cause—use it even if you do not take it too seriously. Maybe Marx was correct to this extent that in fact the bourgeoisie liberalist does endeavor to prostitute religion by using it as an opiate, or, perhaps, now as the one remaining life-line.

Another lesson this experience brings home was expressed well by Henry Maret of the Grand Orient back in the eighteenth century, namely: "The so-called neutrality in education is an absurdity; neutrality is impossible; from the moment a school master does not teach religion, he thereby teaches unbelief. To pretend that neutrality is all that is wanted is hypocrisy in the 17th degree." My seven little "atheists" appear to confirm Maret's thesis. Further, this school prided itself in its patriotism—one could see paintings done by the art class of the Jap as a wicked yellow gorilla. That

was why the words of Guizot came to my mind. "Moral and religious education is more necessary in free countries than elsewhere." Could this necessity be met by one 50 minute period of Catholic religion each week? Indeed, one wonders where all this freedom talk will end. Will it mean that religious education will no longer be financially discriminated against; that, perhaps, Catholic children will be permitted to ride the school buses their parents' tax money helped to buy, and so forth? Or will the farce of educational neutrality continue in our public schools?

Too, there is the problem of the increase of child delinquency. Really one should not be surprised; for child delinquency has always been the noxious flower of godless education. France experienced this same thing when religion was outlawed from her schools—in the name of freedom, of course. The war no doubt is the *occasion* of the recent upsurge in delinquency, but it is not the *cause*, which is amoral if not immoral education. However, our liberals do not seem to grasp the connection.

Finally, the case of this school should be a warning to Catholic parents. The fourth commandment of God places on parents the responsibility of their children's spiritual education and welfare. To send their own beloved offspring to a neutral (so-called) school is to place their children's soul and future happiness in jeopardy. The plea that there are no Catholic schools which equal in educational advan-

tages these non-Catholic institutions is simply not true. Even, if the school did not have "only one atheist on the faculty," it would still be highly dangerous. Every class in such a school does its subtle bit to undermine the Catholic belief—as I have discovered from conversations with my Catholic boys. It was not only a Professor X who constantly brought pure religion into his history classes. But Professor Y in physics class took occasion the day he explained the universality of Newton's gravitation law to say that Christ's walking on the waters could not have actually happened; such would have been contrary to Newton's law.

To what extent such irreligion is prevalent in the grades is difficult to determine. But that the irreligion of our higher secular colleges is beginning to seep down even to the innocent minds of the grade school children is more and more evident. How long will that pillar of democracy, as George Washington termed religion, be able to withstand the disintegrating activities of our atheistic professors? But enough. And as a parting thought—one wonders how the millions of our men on the world's battle fronts would react if they knew that many of the so-called intellectual defenders of democracy were by their poisonous anti-God teaching destroying the foundations of the Constitution, man's inalienable rights and the freedoms they, brave self-sacrificing men, are spilling their life's blood to preserve, or, at least, are duped into believing that it is for these things they are letting it flow!

The Newly Baptized Indian

After his baptism the Indian heard the voice of the Great Spirit telling him to bring his knife to the mission and give it for the service of God. The Indian made excuses to the Great Spirit, telling him that he needed the knife for hunting; but the "voice" was insistent, and finally the Indian submitted and brought the knife to the Missionary.

Then the voice of the Great Spirit said to him: "Indian, bring me your pony," then again: "Bring me your blanket" and finally he was asked to give himself.

Kneeling at the foot of the altar at the Mission, the Indian consecrated himself to God. Then he heard the Holy Voice again, saying to him: "Now you are MINE. Take MY knife, take MY pony and take MY blanket."

The joy of the Indian was already great because he belonged to God, and now he was much more consoled because God gave him all he needed back again.

By "A Voice from the Prairies of Canada."



GERALDINE LAWHORN

When we observe the things we can see, there isn't time to search for the things we cannot see.

If we listen to the things we can hear, there isn't time to worry about the things we cannot hear.

When we make use of the things we know, there isn't a moment left to wonder about the things we don't know.

When we occupy ourselves with the things we can do, we're much too busy to worry about the things we can't do.

If we smile at all we find beautiful and laugh at all we find amusing, when will there be time to cry over what is sad?—G. L.

I Haven't Time To Be Pitied

As told to Bill Parker

by Geraldine Lawhorn

NOW and then someone who doesn't look beneath the surface offers me sympathy. They pity me and feel I've been cheated by life. I understand their good intentions towards a blind and deaf girl seemingly handicapped beyond hope, but I haven't time to be pitied. I have a career to further.

All that I have accomplished and those accomplishments I hope will come I owe to God. I am the tool and proudly use those blessings he saw fit to give me to the best of my ability. This is my story. I hope it may help others to learn that life itself is the important thing. There are no handicaps, problems or worries that can crush the joy of sheer living.

I was born in perfect health on December 31, 1916, in Dayton, Ohio. Dad owned a motion picture theatre and Geraldine Farrar was Hollywood's brightest star. They named me Geraldine and like my namesake fate was to make me an actress.— But first I was to learn fear, discouragement, and suffer limitations of all kinds.

When I was nearing my second birthday we moved to Chicago, and Dad took a new theatre. Mom tells me I spent much of my time prancing before the long mirror with a turkish towel thrown over my shoulders for an empress's cape. For two more years my childhood was that of any growing girl.

Then I suffered a severe case of measles. My eyes began to grow weak and I spent much time in doctors' offices. At nine, I had to stop school. I did not mind my failing sight. I could still see well enough to skate, play ball, and be the leader of the neighborhood kids. Staying home from school was a wonderful idea. Other children studied while I played with my dolls or dog.

I loved to make up stories about every doll, box, and stick, and imagine they were live creatures in a world of dreams. I could never tell a story without adding my own ideas. I'd fret for fear of being caught, but my world was made up of imaginations and dreams, so I told them my way.

When I was twelve Mom thought I should begin studying again. Never in those trying years did her faith in my future waver. Many blind children were attending the Braille and sight saving rooms established in Chicago by Mr. John B. Curtis. He believed we should attend school with normal children.

Mr. Curtis knew that too many feel that the blind are creatures to be pitied, but not given a place in society, so I attended classes with the sighted students using our braille books.

I learned to type on both typewriter and Braille writer. I learned basketry, sewing, and the extra arts that would help me to solve my problem of blindness. Now the full realization of blindness and its meaning came to me. I was very conscious of being different. I dreaded other children staring at me when I read, so I memorized my lessons at home so I wouldn't have to use a book in class.

Then the teachers and students stared because I was apparently smarter than the rest. I liked that reason for attention better.

I began to enjoy life again, but it was to be short-lived. My hearing began to bother me. The constant necessity for having half-heard words repeated was both depressing and tiring. Trying to hear used up more of my energy than all else. I took refuge in books. Now I was no longer ashamed of Braille. I was grateful for it. I read all the time—anywhere.

I fought listlessness, despair, and the temptation to give up everything and reached the sophomore

grade at Chicago's Marshall High School when my hearing went out altogether. The heat was like a burden on my head. It seemed to close over my ears as though my head were inside a kettle with no ventilation. Soon the ringing subsided and the sounds of the world faded out with it. My prayers had been answered. I had asked God that unless my hearing could be perfect to make me completely deaf. I was now blind and deaf.

Strangely deafness brought with it a strong desire for knowledge, a hunger to accomplish things I had once thought impossible. The Braille teacher at Marshall endeared herself to me. She understood and believed in me. I was to finish high school.

My assignments were sent to my room, where volunteers prepared them for me in Braille. Soon I mastered the alphabet glove. My hearing was gone, but with this magic glove I could converse with anyone. The letters of the alphabet are printed on the joints of the fingers and thumb. Even the sighted students could talk to me by simply spelling out their messages by touching the proper letters. My teachers insisted on my talking each day. I recited poems, told stories, and laughed with my friends.

In 1938 I knew that life was to be treasured. My heart was full. I graduated from High School an honor student and was chosen "Most Successful Girl." At last I knew that my handicaps could be overcome. I planned and dreamed and then set out to make them come true.

There was little Braille material for college work so I stayed at Marshall as a post graduate. My Braille teacher, Mrs. Gentry, was a second mother. Her time and love were mine. She knew my hopes and offered help and encouragement that can never be repaid. She purchased a correspondence course in short story writing which was transcribed into Braille. I wanted to write. I loved the lessons.

Then "Blondie" came into my life. I had not hoped for a guide dog, but the Catholic Youth Organization was interested in my career and put up the necessary money. I had not been out of doors much and was afraid of traffic. Blondie helped me to conquer my fears. She gave me a chance to get out-door exercise. Blondie gave me strength, endurance, patience, health, and popularity.

Many people remember Blondie who have forgotten me. A little girl once called me Blondie. She couldn't remember which was girl and which was dog. Later Blondie inspired me to write about him, and the story "Ears of Gold" was published in a national magazine.

Now I began to write. It was wonderful to feel the thrill of creating. I was encouraged when my story "Knitter" won first prize in a Chicago newspaper contest. Later I told of my life in an autobiography, "He that feareth is not made perfect." This won an award and I thought back to that first day when Mrs. Gentry gave me the short-story correspondence course. The road had seemed so long, but I had been rewarded. My success as an author stirred an old longing that I dared not think about—the stage. Could I succeed as an actress without being labeled a freak. I could try.

A friend coached me in public speaking. At first I gave small talks about Blondie, and my interest in drama grew rapidly. Soon I gave my first dramatic recital before an audience of two hundred.—It was wonderful to know that I held their interest.—I had found something I could do in life.—I began to write my own sketches and then interpreted them before people that were often unaware I was deaf and blind.

Then Mom insisted I study music.—I disliked the idea. I wanted to write and act. What could music mean to me? But Mom won me over and I entered the American Conservatory. At first I learned songs I remembered from childhood. Later I learned more difficult selections.

I do not enjoy the vibration as so many think. Perhaps those who have never heard music can enjoy the vibration from the piano, but having once enjoyed the sound I find the vibration a poor substitute. To me it is like the vibration of the street car which I'm always glad to leave. I like the rhythm in playing the piano, the pattern of a song and the pleasure of accomplishment.

The music helped my programs. Before, I had to have an assistant to play music. Now I could do the whole show alone. I am still far from being a finished musician, but the thrill of having met another challenge is sweet.

Soon I shall celebrate my 28th birthday. I have learned so much about people, how they look at life, what they do under certain circumstances, how they express themselves that I have no real need of eyes. True I cannot hear the song of the whippoorwill or the soft babbling of the brook, but I can share the joy of those that can hear as they tell me of such things.

Not long ago someone told me that my accomplishments had been remarkable. They spoke of the past while I live for today and the future.

Whatever I do, whatever I accomplish, whenever I succeed it is not my ability, my power, or superiority, but God's. All power is His and His power is never limited. This is my story.

The Miracle at Girkalnis*

Editor's Note: In conformity with the decree of Holy Mother Church, we declare that the incidents described herein are a mere personal report, that we do not vouch for their authenticity, and by their publication we by no means wish to influence or forestall the decision of the Church in these matters.—The Editor

THE story of the apparition at Girkalnis was sent by members of the Lithuanian underground to Rome, whence the report was transmitted to this country by a Catholic Bishop of the Eastern Rite, residing there. Following the cautious example of the Church in these matters, we must not be too quick to accept this report as incontrovertible fact; on the other hand, we must await God's further will and not commit the folly of rejecting it with finality. We have every reason to believe in the reliability of the eye-witnesses, especially since many of them are known personally to people in this country. With these considerations in mind, and not finding anything in the account contrary to faith or morals, we give you the story of Girkalnis.

A LAND TORN BY WAR

Lithuania, located at a strategic crossroad of Europe, today lies prostrate and bleeding, the helpless pawn of a devastating war. Her homes, industries and farms despoiled, her youth gone, uncounted thousands of her people slaughtered and sent into slavery through three successive invasions and occupations, Lithuania—along with the rest of freedom-loving enslaved Europe fights back against her oppressors with courage and determination. Her silent but passionate resistance to the invaders helped the forces of freedom and liberty in their swift advances against the enemy. And though her future as a free state is uncertain and beclouded, Lithuania is at least rid of the terror of Nazi occupation.

The faith of their fathers has remained to this day the most fiercely protected of the heritages of the Lithuanian people. They have been deprived of almost everything during the past four years by grasping and arrogant invaders, but they have stubbornly refused to yield their right to worship their God. They have proudly upheld their sacred responsibility as the northernmost representatives of Catholicity in Europe. The parish church in

every one of hundreds of Lithuanian villages was a constant haven of courage, consolation and spiritual strength during the dark days which befell these people.

THE VILLAGE OF GIRKALNIS

Girkalnis is one such tiny village near the center of Lithuania. The steeple of its parish church, St. Georges, rises proudly to the skies, overlooking the homes and farms which nestles around it, as if for comfort and security. Its people are simple and hardworking. They are accustomed to hardship and struggle. The suffering and devastation of war are nothing new to them. The brutalities of gauleiters and commissars have but strengthened them in their stubborn determination to some day regain the peace and happiness which they enjoyed briefly for twenty-two years of independence. Almost without exception, they are devoutly Catholic.

THE APPARITION

On the evening of February 8, 1943, the people of Girkalnis saw a strange light hovering above the tower of their church. It was 8 o'clock in the evening, and the deepening darkness added brilliance to the glow. The light was seen not only by the people of the village, but also by many travellers on the road some distance away, and even by the residents of adjacent villages.

The light, which was at first thought to be some natural phenomenon, soon attracted a crowd of curious, excited people. The onlookers were startled and frightened to see the strange mass of light descend slowly until it stopped at the pinnacle of the church tower.

What happened then is best told in the words of one of the eye-witnesses: "The light was oval shaped, and enclosed in a frame of brilliant, rainbow-hued stars. At the top and bottom of the oval were larger single stars of the same color. While we gazed on this mysterious light, human figures appeared in the center of the oval—a strikingly beautiful young woman, garbed in white, with an Infant on her left arm. The figures were clear and distinct, and seen by everyone present, as their great emotion and then excited conversation later revealed. Haloes of brilliant stars surrounded the heads of the Mother and Child. Their features were plainly seen, though covered by a transparent bluish haze. The light emitted by the apparition

* From LEAVES Magazine, Nov.-Dec. 1944 issue.

was dazzling in its brilliance, and yet pleasing to the eye.

The apparition remained at the top of the tower for about 15 minutes, and then began descending slowly, directly down into the tower. The steeple appeared to become transparent, as if made of glass. After reaching the interior of the church, the apparition moved to the sanctuary and stopped again at the main altar, where it remained in view for five or ten minutes. During this time the interior of the church was bathed in a flood of dazzling, glittering light, the reflection from which shone through the windows and lit up the church-yard and surrounding area.

The strange glow began to dim gradually and the apparition at the altar slowly melted away into the darkness. Within a short time nothing remained. Outside, the night was quiet and clear, with a starlit sky and a peaceful half-moon."

WITNESSED BY NON-CATHOLICS

The vision was witnessed by everyone who happened to be in the vicinity. An amazing fact is that some of those present happened to be indifferent and fallen-away Catholics. There were even

several non-Catholics among the people. They, too, witnessed the entire incident. These people, the report states, were among the first to hurry to the Church authorities to tell them about the miraculous apparition. They admitted later that, while they were greatly moved and even frightened by the sight, the thought of prayer was furthest from their minds. They had seen a miracle with their very own eyes, and they had no natural explanation for what had occurred. Since then, these people have become devout Catholics.

Included in the account received in this country are the names of eyewitnesses who attested under oath to what they had seen. Among them are a former colonel of the Lithuanian Army, a monsignor, a priest, and a long list of residents of Girkalnis, including men, women and children.

THE APPARITION APPEARS AGAIN

The apparition appeared a second time, in the same place, a week later, on February 15th at 5 o'clock in the morning. It reappeared about a month later, on March 17th at 8 o'clock in the morning, but this time over the main altar within the church, while Mass was being offered at one of the side altars.



WEDDING BILLS



WHEN the wedding bells stop ringing, the bills begin rolling in. The wedding couple at Cana had a bill that they could not pay—the price of the water changed into exquisite, blushing wine by their Divine Guest in order to save them the blush of embarrassment before their guests. The Evangelists do not give us the name of the bride, but ancient writers unanimously have identified her as "Susanna," mentioned by St. Luke with the other women who used to provide for the needs of Jesus and His apostles from their means. That was one way of repaying the wedding debt—by accompanying the Master in His missionary work and helping to support the apostolic company by donations of money and personal services.

"Susanna... who used to provide for them."
—St. Luke 8:3.

Christ said that we shall always have the poor with us. Poverty means privation and suffering. Suffering can be both physical and spiritual. Hence there are the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Two of these, that money cannot buy, but that even the poorest can afford, are—"to visit the sick" and "to comfort the afflicted." A visit to the sick is to be considered a work of mercy only when it is made to afford relief to the sufferer. "Susanna" means "lily." Flowers are a source of cheer and hope to the sufferer. But still more bracing are the words of comfort spoken to the afflicted one, raising his depressed spirits to the rarefied atmosphere of the thought of God's watchful Providence, tender care, and justice-assuaging mercy. Such flowers will not have to be removed at night when they are needed most.

An account of the words addressed to several of the witnesses by the apparition during the last appearance is given in the report sent from Lithuania. Asked who she was the vision replied: "I am the Mother of Mercy and I wish to be honored by that name."

One woman present cried out "Holy Mother of God, help our suffering nation!" to which the apparition answered sadly: "Your people have broken their faith with my Son and by their sins and forgetfulness of Him have merited punishment. Your nation would have long since been destroyed, if it were not for my Son's infinite mercy and my constant prayers for you. Only by returning to Him can you be saved. I am your Protectress, and

I have come down from Heaven to help you." Asked how long she would remain, the apparition gave a cryptic answer, "I will remain with you to the end. I wish to scatter my graces not only upon your nation, but upon the entire world."

She became silent, and the woman again begged her: "Mary, help us! Ask your Son to remove this punishment (the bombardment of war) from us!" The Virgin did not answer, but bowed her head toward the Infant in her arms. He nestled his head close to her cheek, and her lips were seen moving as if she were whispering to Him. She then looked up, smiled, and blessed the people present with a large sign of the Cross. Immediately afterwards the apparition disappeared from view.

Fifteen Reasons for **The Liberation of Lithuania**

Anthony Dainus

- 1—Russia's seizure of Lithuania was a violation of international law:
 - a—On July 23, 1940 our State Department labeled the plebiscite a fraud.
 - b—Seizure as "strategic territory" is as invalid for Stalin as it was for Hitler or Tojo.
- 2—The United States is morally bound to restore her, for we armed Russia her aggressor.
- 3—The United States, Great Britain and Russia implicitly guaranteed her freedom in the Atlantic Charter for she was independent before the war.
- 4—President Roosevelt promised an independent Lithuania to the Lithuanian Delegation on Oct. 15, 1940 and to the President of Lithuania-in-exile, Antanas Smetona on April 18, 1941.
- 5—Russia guaranteed her independence time and again:
 - a—The Lithuanian and Soviet Treaty of 1920.
 - b—Lithuanian and Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty of 1926.
 - c—Renewal of Lithuanian and Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty in 1934.
 - d—Lithuanian and Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact of Oct. 10, 1939.
 - e—Molotov's declaration of Oct. 31, 1939: "Russia renounced all rights to Lithuania for all time."
 - f—Her espousal of the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration of the United States in Jan. 1942.

- g—On Nov. 6, 1942 Stalin promised "the liberation of enslaved nations."
- h—At the Moscow Conference of Nov. 1943 the Soviets promised the people the right "to choose the form of government under which they desire to live."
- 6—Under the Soviet system Lithuania, as a nation is doomed: 200,000 Lithuanians were executed or deported at the first Russian occupation with 50% of the nation slated for exile, both of which according to neutral Swedish and Swiss reports were ruthlessly renewed in their second occupation; e.g., massacres at Syrai, Kaunas, Utena, Ukmerge, etc.
- 7—Thousands of Lithuanians are utterly helpless, especially those in Siberian concentration camps, because of the Soviet non-recognition of the Red Cross and her refusal to disclose the exiles' whereabouts.
- 8—Lithuanian, one of the oldest languages in the world, similar to ancient Sanskrit, will become extinct (Russian is compulsory) thanks to us who boast of preserving monuments of culture and civilization.
- 9—Under the Soviet form of Fascism, or Communism, religious persecution continues unabated in Lithuania with the minimum expectation as in Russia—50% loss of believers, 90% loss of clergy and a total loss of its institutions. (Soviet and Czarist aims being identical:

- eradication of both the Lithuanian language and the Catholic Church.)
- 10—Lithuania would succumb economically, culturally and socially to the Asiatic horde and their Oriental depravity:
 - a—They ruined her agriculture and commerce.
 - b—Seized and abolished private property.
 - c—Completely suppressed the Lithuanian press.
 - d—Burned her libraries.
 - e—Disbanded 6,000 organizations.
 - f—Liquidated half of the educated class.
 - g—Sovietized education and forbade religious instruction.
 - h—Forbade education abroad.
 - i—Looted her museums.
 - j—Confiscated monasteries.
 - k—Stripped churches.
 - l—Executed clergy.
 - m—Officially decreed vengeance on the family of their enemies.
 - 11—Lithuania is a "peace-loving nation": She yielded to Poland in the Vilna Dispute, to Germany in the Memel Question and to Russia in her demand for army bases, and refused a Nazi demand for a Lithuanian Legion against Russia. Her "admirable progress" was extolled by both Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles.
 - 12—The United States would continue to lose prestige throughout the world, especially in the eyes of Catholic South America if we sold a helpless Catholic nation (80%) to an atheistic tyrant whom they still refuse to recognize. They do grant diplomatic status to Lithuanian Consuls.
 - 13—Lithuania was not created by the Treaty of Versailles; she had been independent for a thousands years and regained her independence through a bloody revolution, one of six which the Russian tyrant experienced at each Lithuanian generation.
 - 14—Independence as an acknowledgement of gratitude: The Lithuanians ruling from the Baltic to the Black Seas, drove the Tartars out of Central Europe and Russia in the 13th and 14th centuries and checked Genghis Khan.
 - 15—Stalin has repudiated Czarism and its debts; why not the Czarist loot—the Baltic States.

Mission Intention for the Month of July

FREEDOM TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN THE INTERIOR OF ASIA

In this day when the tenets of democracy, with its purported freedom of worship clause, are heralded throughout the world, it may seem strange to read an appeal for prayers for "freedom to preach the Gospel in the interior of Asia." However, a study of the facts and a perusal of the map proves the wisdom of the action of the Holy See.

Just what is meant by the interior of Asia? Perhaps, exercising poetic license, we might say it includes the territory from the vale of Kashmire to Siberia; again it may embrace the land from the Himalayas to the Arctic Circle. Actually the area is huge—in part wild and desolate as are the districts included in it: Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Turkestan, the Asiatic sections of the U.S.S.R., and outer Mongolia. Even the most desultory study of history marks these as "forbidden" spots in the realms of mission activity. The fanaticism of the Moslems, the mysticism of the Hindus, the warlike attitude of the Sikhs, the ritualistic practices of Lamaism, the professed godlessness of the Communists, would seem to create a barrier more formidable than the towering ridges of the Himalayas.

Yet, just as our boys are now flying daily over the seemingly impassable "hump" bringing aid to China, so our missionaries are ready and eager to undertake work in these closed areas. Twelve years ago Archbishop de Guebriant, Superior General of the Paris Foreign Mission Society called the Abbot of St. Maurice to discuss with him the possibility of sending some of the monks from his renowned abbey, founded in 515 A.D., to found an outpost on the borders of the closed lands of Bhutan and Tibet. The Abbot journeyed to the area designated by Arch-bishop de Guebriant and today a Prefecture Apostolic is located in the heart of one of the forbidden areas.

The conquest of Poland by Russia may also prove a boomerang for the Church in the Asiatic sections of the U.S.S.R. The internment of Polish priests and nuns may form the leaven which will restore Christ to His rightful place in the hearts and homes of the Russian people. Prayer and charity are the necessities for the expansion of this apostolate. Through these media we will fulfill the wishes of His Holiness who does not "hesitate to look to the future with a serene eye." Thus "the present century, even though born proud and presumptuous with its accumulated delusions and ruins, will in the field of Catholic missions bear a rich harvest." Let us hope this will be realized particularly in the vast sections of the interior of Asia."

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Right Rev. Msgr. Thomas J. McDonnell National Director

Do You Know Your Religion?

Jack Kearns

A well-informed Catholic knows the answers to common questions about Catholic Faith and practice. We are not all expected to be expert theologians, but we should know the essentials. The more we know about our Faith, the more we shall love it and see how eminently reasonable is the service it asks of us.

Studying religion can be good fun, too. Here are some statements concerning the Mass. Check the word or words, a, b, c or d, that seems to you most correct for filling out the statement. The answers are given on page 175.

(1) Catholics are obliged to hear Mass on—*a.* Good Friday *b.* Ash Wednesday *c.* Armistice Day *d.* New Year's.

(2) The sacrifice of the Mass was instituted—*a.* by Melchisedech *b.* by Christ at the Last Supper *c.* by Christ on the Cross *d.* by the Council of Trent.

(3) The Mass is—*a.* only a sign or symbol of the sacrifice of the Cross *b.* the same as the sacrifice of the Cross, though unbloody *c.* a sacrifice handed down from the Old Testament *d.* just beautiful ceremonies made up by the Apostles.

(4) the three principal parts of the Mass are—*a.* the Offertory, the Consecration and the Communion *b.* the Epistle, the Gospel and the Communion *c.* the Gospel, the Consecration and the Conclusion *d.* the Introit, the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei.

(5) Mass is said in Latin because—*a.* the Pope is an Italian and Latin is just like Italian *b.* Latin is studied in college and is more high-brow than English *c.* the Apostles all spoke Latin *d.* it is a permanent, universal language.

(6) Besides Latin, Mass is also said in some parts of the world in—*a.* Italian *b.* Greek *c.* Chinese *d.* Old French.

(7) The best way to assist at Mass is—*a.* to follow the priest with your Missal *b.* to say your Rosary *c.* to watch everything the priest does *d.* to pray in your own humble way.

(8) You do not fulfill your obligation of hearing Mass—*a.* if you are behind a pillar and can't see the priest very much *b.* if you do not attend Mass in your own parish church *c.* if you are guilty of some slight distractions *d.* if you read the comics to pass the time.

(9) You are *not* late for Mass if you get there just—*a.* before the Consecration *b.* before the priest begins the prayers at the foot of the altar *c.* before the Gospel *d.* before the people receive Holy Communion.

(10) You do not miss Mass if you come in just—*a.* as the bell rings to kneel down *b.* at the sermon *c.* before the first Gospel *d.* before the last Gospel.

(11) If you arrive at Mass on Sunday at the Communion—*a.* you have to stay for the next Mass until the Communion *b.* you may as well forget all about it as you did get to church *c.* you ought to pray for a little while *d.* you still have the obligation of hearing a complete Mass.

(12) If, through no fault of your own, you miss Mass on Sunday—*a.* you are obliged to say the Rosary instead *b.* you have to hear two Masses the next Sunday *c.* you have to go to Mass on Monday *d.* you are guilty of no sin because of your absence.

(13) The obligation of hearing Mass on holy days—*a.* binds under pain of venial sin *b.* has been removed in the United States *c.* is as binding as the Sunday obligation *d.* does not hold in the case of mixed marriages.

(14) To avoid being late for Sunday Mass—*a.* you are obliged to go to bed very early on Saturday night *b.* you must get there ten minutes before Mass starts *c.* you should use practical, ordinary common sense *d.* you should have breakfast as early as possible.

(15) You are excused from going to Mass—*a.* if it is raining *b.* if you are sick *c.* if it will interfere with your social obligations *d.* if you are in the state of mortal sin.

(16) There is no obligation to hear Mass on Sunday for—*a.* all those over 60 *b.* little boys under three *c.* people who are so deaf they can't hear the priest anyway *d.* all children under 10.

(17) Masses are invalid and do not count—*a.* if the celebrant is not in the state of grace *b.* if he has not been validly ordained *c.* if there is not a sufficient number of persons present *d.* if there are no altar boys.

(18) Priests may say three Masses on—*a.* All Saints' Day *b.* All Souls' Day *c.* Easter *d.* Pentecost.

(19) A solemn high Mass is—*a.* one that is celebrated in cathedrals by bishops *b.* one that is sung by a priest, but with a full choir *c.* one sung only at funerals of important people *d.* one sung by a priest with two other priests assisting him as deacon and sub-deacon.

(20) The color of the vestments worn by the priest at Mass is never—*a.* black *b.* brown *c.* green *d.* red.

How Can You Speak Good Things?

Calvin T. Ryan

MUCH interesting study is being made of man's speech and of his language. There seems to be a strong relationship between his speech and his personality. Even between his speech and his health. Let a person talk and he tells all listeners what he is and what he stands for.

In truth, we have many references in the Bible which should make us careful of our speech. We are told that "of every idle word men speak, they shall give account on the day of judgment." And again, "You brood of vipers, how can you speak good things when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Monsignor Knox translates Matthew 12:35-36: "a good man utters good words from his store of goodness, the wicked man, from his store of wickedness, can utter nothing but what is evil."

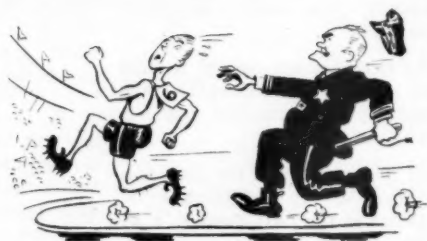
It does seem, therefore, that "your language is you," the best single index to your inner life and thoughts. If your inner life is good then you can speak good things. When Augustine writes in *Confessions* about his mother, and especially of their last conversation before her death, the reader feels that he knows the inner life of both mother and son, and that it was good. An analyst of President Truman's radio voice concludes that while it differs widely from that of both Churchill's and Roosevelt's, it "spreads the feeling that he is a man of the people, a feeling that in times past has bolstered our national sense of confidence and security."

Dr. Alfred Korzybski, the father and director of the modern science of semantics, speaks of "mentally sick Hitler" and his "new methods of destruction of sanity and civilization" through verbal distortion. He even points out resemblances between the talk and writings of hospitalized mental patients and that of *Mein Kampf*. Dr. Korzybski thinks that if Hitler and his associates had not been in power they

would have been confined. "Those trained under such leadership, without protection, in many instances are bound to break down, as their orientations are based on false knowledge." So when we Americans find it hard to understand how the German people can have been so degraded as to commit the horrors of

which they are accused, we may, for one thing, study the effect of Hitler's method of "verbal distortion." That is, they have become like the language they have been taught to use. How can they speak good things out of their store of wickedness?

Jesus is reported in Matthew 15:



Be sure you bring no spiked shoes when you go to Maine, for if you wear them in public, you'll be paving the way for saying, "Good morning, Judge."

And an old Pennsylvania law made eating meat on Sunday punishable by death!

As for New Hampshire, here's the problem posed by one of their traffic laws. It says that when two autos meet at an intersection, *each* must wait for the other to pass.



19 as saying: "all that comes out of his (man's) mouth comes from the heart, and it is that which makes a man unclean." Speaking good things depends upon our having a clean heart, "For it is from the heart that his wicked designs come." The author of *Ecclesiastius* was speaking wisdom when he said: "The stroke of a whip maketh a blue mark: but the stroke of the tongue will break the bones. Many have fallen by the edge of the sword but not so many as have perished by their own tongue."

It is unfortunate that in the United States we have not been given that respect for our language that the ancient Greeks had for theirs, or that the modern French have for theirs. In some parts of the United States it is still considered "he-man stuff" to speak incorrectly, and sissy to speak correctly. That attitude is a left-over from our pioneer days. For those who hold such an attitude, to think of our language as something sacred, or something to be respected is indeed quite foreign. They often make a misapplication of the Commandment not to take God's name in vain, and seem to think it a mark of vanity not to take it in vain. George Washington once told his troops: "We can have little hope of that blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by our impiety

and folly."

Unhappily for our youth, uncouth, even impious, speech is the vogue in our motion pictures, and many of our novels use dialog that one would hesitate to read aloud in decent society. Younger brothers and sisters are bound to think it "mannish" to talk the "soldier and sailor" talk of their returning brothers and sisters.

We need to bestir ourselves in print, in our schools, and in our homes to make it clear to young people that our language is something sacred, and that many are beginning to think that we grow like the language we use. Individuals, even whole people, grow like the language they hear, read, and use. Witness the Germans! The Creator has not blessed man above all other forms of His creation with the instruments of speech, with the medium of thinking and reasoning, for naught. To misuse that gift is not to please Him, of that we can be certain.

There is something worthwhile and abiding in the classic "nothing

too much," "moderation in all things," and the biblical "yea, yea" and "nay, nay." We laugh at the published boners of college students, but the careful teacher takes them seriously, for they may be the faults of his own bad teaching. If not that, they are an index to the student's inner life. They represent wholesome ignorance,—always pardonable; or crass indifference,—a fault that may touch the very soul of the student.

It does matter what our children and youth read. The content matters. The life depicted in the story or the play may be false, or may give a false slant to life. But the language also matters. What the child gets charged with emotion, what he gets in pictorial language is going to have a lasting effect. It will become for him a language mode.

How can you speak good things? First of all your heart must be clean, your thoughts pure, and your imagination under control. O Lord, create in me a clean heart! The psalmist must have known what he was asking for. In the second place, your medium of expression must be pure, clean, and sincere. You must respect the language you speak. There is still a place in modern society for the Christian Gentleman, and he will have no interest in any pioneer "he-man stuff."

Answers to "Do You Know Your Religion?"

- | | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|
| 1—d | 6—b | 11—d | 16—b |
| 2—b | 7—a | 12—d | 17—b |
| 3—b | 8—d | 13—c | 18—b |
| 4—a | 9—b | 14—c | 19—d |
| 5—d | 10—c | 15—b | 20—b |



FOR DEFENSE
POSTAL SAVINGS STAMPS
FOR SALE HERE

The GRAIL
Boosts
The
Seventh
Bond
Drive
Invest in Victory

AN ARCHANGEL appeared in the doorway: the sudden hush, the peace, the light made us aware of his presence. He folded his shining wings to admit of his entrance, but even then the doorway was too narrow, and for a brief instance the lintels were permeated with angelic essence. He dimmed the radiance, lest we be blinded, and when we had greeted him, we offered him the teacher's chair.

The teacher took a place among the pupils, alert and eager for the lesson to come. Our hearts were uplifted in the joy of his presiding, and we felt folded by his wings in tenderness and security.

He began the lesson by explaining that he was giving an examination consisting of only one question. We might guess at the answer; but when we arrived at the correct conclusion, there would be one certain element to show us we were right. This was the question:

"Consider alphabetically the names of the persons in this room, and let me know when you come to one whom you would call a Saint. Remember: one definite circumstance will show you the correctness of your answer."

This was not hard; it was like a game. We started aloud, but a gesture from the Angel stopped us. Since our thinking processes which we willed to communicate to him were just as clear as spoken words, we realized we could take this examination without hurting anyone's feelings:

"A? well, maybe—she is so humble and unassuming when she is corrected or praised. B? yes, that might be—we have seen her practice obedience under difficult circumstances, and the obedient shall speak of victory. But still, we have not come to the sign of absolute certainty."

"Go on."

"C? perhaps. She is friendly and charitable. And charity is the bond of perfection."

"Continue."

"D? most likely; I love her dearly; everybody loves her. E? well, she is a hidden soul, a prayerful soul. She might be one. F? Oh, heavens, no."

"Oh Heavens, yes."

That is the test. That is the Angel's joke. It is the one we think least likely to be a saint, the one to whom we, even we, feel superior, the one whose faults and foibles are so well known to us that her virtues are obscured.

The Angel explains: "That is the lesson of the hidden life of Jesus. It is the miracle only His Godhead could have accomplished. He lived among men so simply, so naturally that not even His brethren recognized Him—in the obscurest of villages,

Angel in the

By Sister Mary Arguerite,

in the obscurest of houses, among the obscurest of families. All His shining virtues were in such perfect balance that to the undiscerning He seemed commonplace. It is the test of almost all His Saints."

"But in F's case—" we were ready with our argument, "Why, we *know* she is commonplace. She says such silly things. There is nothing outstanding about her. Nobody pays any attention to her."

"Exactly. Isaias, speaking almost as a commentator instead of a prophet, said of our Divine Master: 'So shall His visage be inglorious among men, and His form among the sons of men.'¹ and the Pharisees said of Him: 'We *know* that this man is a sinner.'² The Pharisees had much more reason to trust their own judgments than we have, because they were the intelligentsia of His day."

Yes, truly. Our convictions are not less sincere than those of the Carmelites in the Little Flower's community, when they said:

"What in the world will superiors find to write about Soeur Therese after she is dead?"

Our convictions are not less short-sighted than those of St. Aloysius' companions, who are recorded as saying:

"Aloysius is not at recreation tonight—*thank God!*" Our convictions are not more unfounded than those of the Passionist lay brothers, who testified to the ill temper and irritableness of their founder. Yet, in the sifting, cautious—and infallible—judgment of the Church, all these are saints. What is our lesson then?

¹ Isaias, 52:14.

² St. John, 9:24.

the Classroom

ter Mary Arguerite, RSM

We are glad to answer the Angel's question now, because we have learned the lesson:

"Human judgement about human frailty is useless. 'Turn a stone and start an angel's wing'—or a saint's halo. We cannot judge correctly our companions' actions, let alone their motives."

"Yes, or—to make a more practical suggestion: let their motives alone."

But we want a special lesson from that gentle angel:

"What is the application in our own case?"

"Reason it out." He is a good teacher, that Angel. He will not tell his pupils something they can think out for themselves.

So we try to think along these lines: "It is silly to say: 'Oh, I could be a saint, were it not for such-and-such circumstances. This occupation, this contradiction, this failure, or this companion—they foil my efforts, they frustrate my attempts.'"

"It would be just as reasonable to say: 'I could learn to type, were it not that I have to punch these infernal keys, and follow the directions in the manual, and take orders from the instructor. It is all so monotonous and useless. It cramps my style and crushes originality, initiative, and enthusiasm.'"

"No, in the latter case we say: 'Oh, I want to learn to type; I will to anything you tell me to do, so long as you help me accomplish my purpose.'"

And why would we trust the instructor? Because she is an expert typist herself. She tells us to do just what she herself does; she has taught many others successfully."

So far, all is clear. But who is going to teach us sanctity in such a simple, obvious way as that?

Who, but the Great Teacher? Why trust Him? Because He is an expert in sanctity; because He would not ask us to do anything He Himself has not done. Would He be willing to teach us? He has taught many. He says:

"Learn of Me—" why? Because I am God and can do what I please? No, that is too broad a reason. Because I had a spectacular death on the cross, and dimmed the lights of Nature and shook her foundations? No. My death brought redemption, but before that, I had thirty years of teaching experience; teaching men that I could do just what I expected them to do.

"Learn of Me—" Why? Because I was a carpenter? No; that is too narrow a reason. Learn of Me—because I am charitable? That, again, is too divine a reason. Well then, WHY? Because I am meek and humble of heart.

That is the lesson anyone can learn; in the primary grade, we teach the child how little and simple and easy are the lessons. That is the philosophy of the perfect teacher straight through the post-graduate courses: to show the pupils how easy, how simple, how accessible are the lessons to be learned: and then to let him exercise his free will, initiative, and enthusiasm.

Granted; in theory all this is true. But there are still those difficulties that have been the cause of our falls in the past: the occupations, contradictions, associations, and failures.

We cannot practice the austerity of St. Paul of the Cross, the detachment and penance of St. Alloysius, the childish simplicity of St. Thérèse. Their circumstances were different. Our difficulties, hindrances, frustrations—all still remain.

"Oh, foolish and slow of heart! I have just been telling you that these hindrances and failures are the text books, the instructions, the exercises. Our Master did not say: 'I cannot make use of electric fans, elevators, airplanes, to teach the people about the fire of the Holy Spirit, the ascent of the soul toward God, detachment from earthly things: My people don't know there are such things; therefore, I can't teach these doctrines.' No. He made use of things that the people of His time knew about: lilies, hens, fishing nets, wheat, weeds, robbers, sheep. He made use of the things around Him to teach a lesson. Is He expecting too much of us to make use of the things around us—and us—to learn the lesson of sanctity?"

"No—not too much. Come often, Angel. We thought we knew the lesson when we could say the words of the answer. We know now we shall have to live the answer in order to learn the lesson."

Lovers

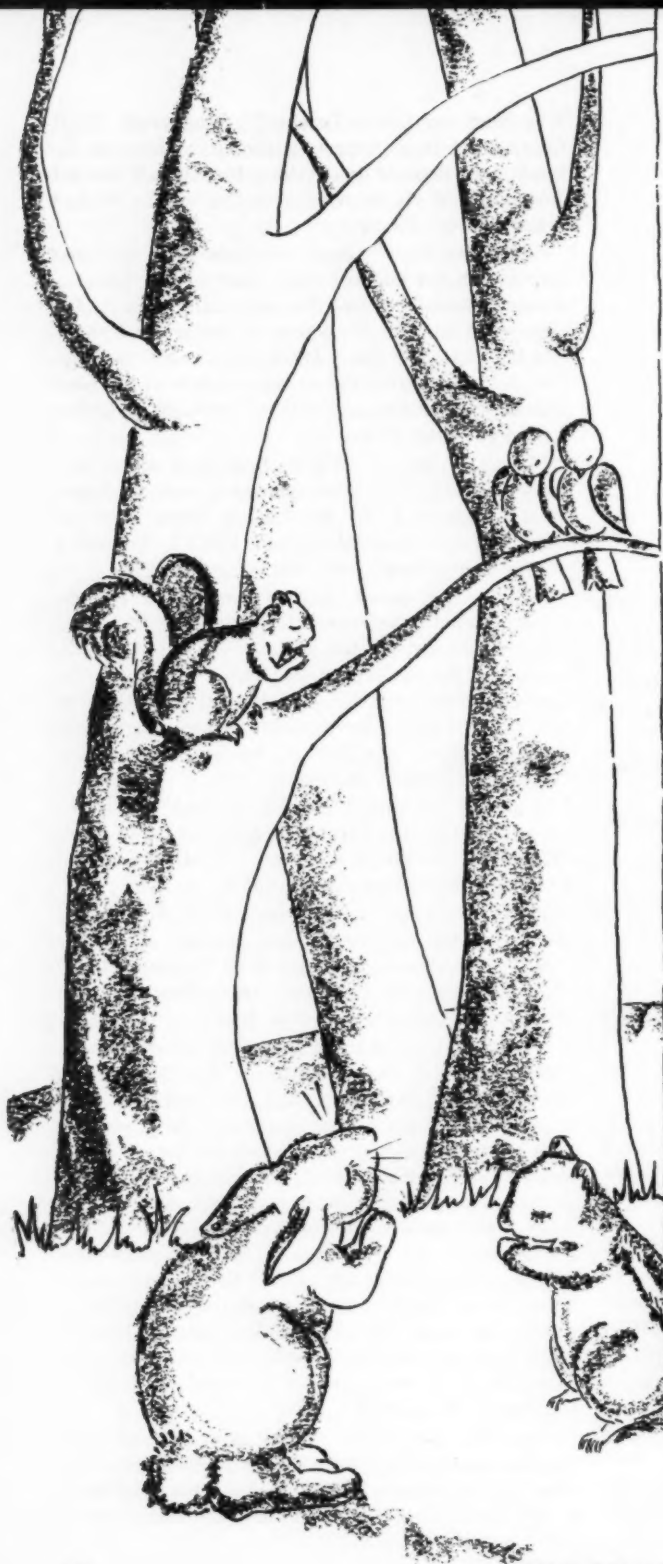
The golden Sunflower loves the Sun,
And turns her face to follow him
Across the sky from East to West
Until his radiant light grows dim.

The pale Moonflower loves the Moon,
And keeps her sweetness folded tight
Within her heart throughout the day
That she may spend herself by night.

The Windflower loves the roving Wind
Who plays with her a little space
Then passes on to try his wiles
On other maidens fair of face.

But all the Flowers love the Rain,
They run to him and, like a cup
To catch his kente kisses in,
They lift their little faces up.

Hallie Whitaker



THE LAST PAYMENT

By Edith Powell Wortman

DANNY ran his stubby, freckled fingers along the glossy surface of the mortar gun in Farnham's toy department and sighed longingly. Its thick solid wheels were perched precariously on a pile of scattered books and the muzzle of its brown-toned, stubby barrel was sniffing the air for action. It was the largest toy gun he had ever seen, half as big as himself. Jeeps, what a guy could do with a gun like that. He could execute a whole war of his own with it. He might even exterminate the night prowler that had been terrorizing their neighborhood. And that would be real.

He proceeded forthwith to enlighten his mother with these strategical facts and that the welfare of mankind in general depended solely upon Danny acquiring possession of this potent weapon.

"No, Danny," she said hurriedly as if the temptation was too much for her. She glanced quickly at the price tag and then drew him gently away.

"But, Mom—" Women's minds are like concrete once they had been set. "This is a special kind of gun. The clerk told me it fired blank ammunition that made as much noise as a real gun. That is, for its size."

"You know how it is about that payment on the house, Danny," she argued wearily. "It's the last payment and if Mr. Wright doesn't get it by Friday he'll take our home away from us. And remember, son," she added, pointing an impressive finger at him, "Mr. Wright is only too anxious for us *not* to make that payment."

She stepped up to the counter to make a purchase and Danny kicked viciously at an empty cardboard box on the floor. "Mr. Wright," he snorted. "Always Mr. Wright." When his father was living they hadn't even known Mr. Wright and now he was always getting between Danny and everything he wanted. And Charlie Scruggs was the same way, only Charlie was always dirty and always begging for things. And when his mother gave Charlie money to buy tobacco and stuff, Charlie bought whiskey with it. Danny had seen him. But could he convince his mother?

Just the other day after Charlie had finished his stew at their kitchen table, she had asked Danny to get her purse from the buffet drawer in the dining room so she could give Charlie another quarter for tobacco. Danny had yanked open the drawer and snatched up the purse. It was bulging

and he figured that was the money she was saving for Mr. Wright. Through the mirror over the buffet he had seen Charlie's wet eyes on him, a loose grin hanging from his bearded lips.

It wasn't fair for her to be giving money to tramps when they themselves had to do without. Like this gun, for instance. He shot a furtive glance at his mother. She was at the other end of the counter arguing with a man clerk whose face looked like a lake that had frozen over during a wind storm. Cautiously Danny began tinkering with the gun's firing apparatus. The parts moved easily under his hand and responded joyfully to his touch. He tested the revolving facilities and to his delight the barrel turned menacingly toward the clerk who suddenly turned into a Jap with small-evil eyes. He had a small package in his hand and instantly Danny was behind the gun. That dirty Jap was about to throw a hand grenade at the American Chief of Staff. This was a matter of split seconds—a matter of life and death. With deadly accuracy he aimed at the exact center of the enemy's nose, and, with wild gesticulation, summoned his crew around him.

"Don't shoot till you see the whites of his eyes," he commanded in a sharp whisper.

The Jap chose that very opportune moment to glare at him with his beady eyes.

"FIRE!" shouted Danny.

The gun belched forth a roar of ear-shattering wrath which slowly died down to dreadful whispers that sounded far away. Danny felt a sharp twitch at his ear and, throwing up his hand for protection, smashed it into the large gun. There was a sickening moment as the large toy poised breathlessly, then, slithering on its avalanche of books, dived with a splintering crash to the floor. One of its beautiful wheels lay doubled under it like the broken leg of an animal. Its muzzle lifted sadly as if trying to get a breath of life-giving air.

Danny noted with considerable relief that there were no other fractures, a fact which seemed to be wholly unappreciated by the ungrateful clerk who smartly ripped off the price tag and handed it to Danny's mother with a snorting air.

A cyclone of considerable proportions raged inside Danny as he watched her grimly count out a goodly portion of the money earmarked for Mr. Wright. The only pleasant part about the whole transaction was that the gun now belonged to him.

Partly for this reason and partly in self defense, Danny decided then and there to name the gun Emma—after his mother.

The fact that Emma had but one wheel made her all the more dear to Danny. Some day, he vowed, he would have a new one made for her. In the meantime he propped her against a stump under the lilac bush in the back yard and draped her affectionately with camouflage gathered from the weed-grown alley. Here, during this first day of warfare, he launched an invasion on a distant jungle shore, annihilated one complete enemy division, invaded Tokyo by direct assault, and blew up the Imperial Palace with one final burst of mortar fire.

When dusk fell he pushed Emma on her one good wheel, jeep style, up the back steps into the house to protect her from night raids. He peered through the door of the sun room and saw his mother, silent and intent, bending over her whirring sewing machine. Something contracted in his throat, drawing it up tight and hard. He ran to her and dropped his head in her lap.

"It was my fault," he wailed. "Now Mr. Wright will take our house and—it's all my fault."

He could feel her warm kiss on the back of his neck and her hands stroke his hair.

"We'll make up for it some way," she soothed. "We still have tomorrow—till five."

"But how? How, Mom?" He cast a wild glance at the pile of unfinished garments on the table. "You said even those wouldn't be enough now, not even if you finished all of them."

"Now, you stop worrying and go put your gun away," she said gently. "Put it in the dining room. We don't use it much; might as well make an arsenal out of it." And she smiled at him as if she didn't have a worry in the world. But when Danny came back from putting his gun away he saw the look was back in her face.

It haunted him as he crept solemnly into bed, thrusting his face deep into the cool, clean depths of his pillow. He couldn't make up his mind whom he hated most—Mr. Wright, Charlie Scruggs, or Hirohito. He flopped over on his back and yawned.

Danny shot bolt upright in bed, wide awake now, his eyes trying to pierce the darkness. He became suddenly aware that the hour was late—very late. He heard a sharp little noise, like a chair scraping the floor. Then he heard a padded step. Another step. His heart pounded wildly. Cautiously he slipped to the door and squinted into the darkness of the dining room. The window was outlined in the soft, reflected light of a street lamp. It cast a glow on the polished surface of his gun which stood just inside the door where Danny

was standing. He reached over and patted it reassuringly.

Suddenly before his horrified eyes a human form passed in silhouette before the lighted window. It was in the room; he could hear its footsteps! It paused, moved its shaggy head cautiously from side to side. Danny's hand flew to his mouth to stifle an outcry. It was Charlie Scruggs! Charlie was after his mother's purse!

His first frantic impulse was to fly to his mother's room. Then the corner of his eye caught a gleam of light from his gun. It was as if Emma had winked at him. Suddenly he slipped into position behind her and trained her trusty barrel straight at the enemy's rear. His crew was around him sweating for action. He whispered words of encouragement to boost their morale.

"These are the times that try men's souls," he whispered tensely.

There was a sudden quick move from the enemy. "FIRE!" shouted Danny.

A roar shattered the night stillness into trembling fragments. There was a shriek of terror from the enemy who bounced half way to the ceiling, stumbled over furniture and hit the screen of the open kitchen window with an unearthly ripping impact which sent him bouncing back.

Danny switched on the light and his mother, eyes popping with fright, came running out in her bath robe. "What in the world—? Danny, what's happened?"

"Phone the police, Mom," he ordered. He had the situation well in hand. "There's the burglar they've been looking for." He flicked his thumb toward the kitchen. Charlie Scruggs was sprawled in a drunken, rag-torn heap on the kitchen floor, his eyes glazed with stark fear and surprise.

"We have met the enemy and he is our'n," chirped Danny boastfully.

When the police had taken Charlie away Mrs. Tupper sank into a chair and shook her head dismally. "Poor Charlie," she sighed.

"But, Mom, Charlie was a burglar—a real burglar." Danny plopped down on the hassock at her feet.

"Danny," she said thoughtfully, idling with the cords of her robe. "I've never told you before but I guess you ought to know." She reached for his hand.

"Charlie used to have a little white cottage," she began, "and a young, rosy-cheeked wife. She took ill and Charlie had to borrow money from Mr. Wright to pay the hospital and doctor bills. She was sick for a long time and the day she died Mr. Wright foreclosed the mortgage and took his home.

Charlie had only one payment left to make." She took out her handkerchief and patted her cheeks. "Charlie started going down after that," she said.

Danny screwed his mouth into a hard knot and kicked the air with his bare right foot. "I wished I was a man," he said stoutly. "I'd—I'd—."

At four o'clock the next afternoon Mrs. Tupper laid down her sewing with a dull, hopeless gesture and stared blankly out of the window. Danny shuffled gloomily out to the front porch where Emma was holding silent vigil over the front lawn. He knelt down and put his arm about her. In one hour Mr. Wright would come for the money which wasn't there—the last payment.

Suddenly a green coupe drew up to the curb and stopped in front of the house. Two men got out. Puzzled and a little frightened, Danny called out cautiously, "Mom, come here quick." She hurried to his side.

One of the men was carrying a camera, adjusting the dangling tripod as he came along. The other breezed up to Danny with poised notebook and pencil in his hands.

"Young man," he chirped, "may we have a statement for the press?" He smiled at Danny's mother. "Oh, yes, pardon me. I am Harry Woods and this is Mr. Saxon. Now, just how did you capture this menace to society?" he asked Danny.

Danny stiffened. "Charlie ain't no m-menace to so-society," he retorted hotly.

The photographer had set up his camera and was dancing around under the black cloth, pointing the lens at Danny. "Stand still, please," he commanded pleasantly. But Danny was too full of the tragedy of Charlie Scruggs to stand very still. He turned to the reporter.

"Charlie used to have a little house," he began. The reporter flicked his pencil to his notebook and began scribbling. Danny felt his mother's restraining hand on his shoulder.

"No, Danny," she implored gently. "The people know about Charlie. No one can really help him—except himself."

"But they don't know about him the way we do, Mom," he protested. "We've got to tell them so's they'll understand—so's they'll know Charlie is good inside of him."

"Let him tell it, Ma'am," Mr. Woods interrupted courteously. It's the boy's story we're after and if that's his story—that's what we want."

Eagerly Danny told Charlie's story just as his mother had told it to him. When he came to the part where Mr. Wright took Charlie's home on the date of the last payment—the day Charlie's wife died—he was stopped by a loud, angry voice at his

elbow. The startled little group turned sharply and there, with his big chest heaving violently, stood Mr. Wright. He glowered at the reporter.

"You're not going to print that," he commanded angrily; "not a word of it."

Danny turned to Mr. Wright and faced him squarely. "And now you've come to take our house, too," he flared.

Just then the camera clicked and the photographer picked up his equipment and went back to the car. Mr. Woods calmly closed his notebook and slipped it into an inside pocket.

"Thank you, son," he said and shook Danny's hand. "Your story will be on the front page tomorrow morning. AND your picture." He smiled wryly at Mr. Wright.

Mr. Wright's face began to twitch and Danny wasn't afraid of him any more because he knew that Mr. Wright was the one who was afraid now. Danny stepped up to him, his fists clenched tight.

"It's you that is the real m-menace to society," he said angrily. "Charlie Scruggs only took little things from people's houses, but *you*—you take the whole house and the people with it."

"Why, you little—"

The reporter started down the steps and Mr. Wright grabbed him by the arm. He didn't look angry any more, or very big. "I—I'll pay you for that story," he croaked hoarsely. His hand trembled as he got out a bulging wallet from his hip pocket. Mr. Woods gave him a peculiar look; the corners of his mouth turned up but he wasn't smiling. He turned his back on Mr. Wright without saying a word and started for his car. Suddenly Danny thought of something—something very important.

"Wait a minute," he called to the reporter.

Mr. Woods turned around and Danny rushed up to him. "Tell him," Danny nodded toward Mr. Wright, "that he can have the story if-if he'll give Charlie's house back to him."

Mr. Wright gave Danny's hand a nervous little pat. "I'll do it," he told Mr. Woods eagerly. "I'll deed it back to him. I'll forfeit the last payment. I'll—"

Mr. Woods studied the situation for a moment. "Come to the office in the morning," he told Mr. Wright curtly, "with the papers."

The green coupe drove away and Mr. Wright got into his car. He started the motor, then motioned for Danny to come over. "Tell your mother," he said, "she can have another month on that payment."

When they were alone his mother hugged Danny and splashed a big tear on his face. "I guess we can get Emma a new wheel now," she said happily.



Benedictine Abbey of Ettal, going into its seventh century. The passion Play text was written here by Father Moser in the late 18th century. This beautiful scene is on the way from Munich to Oberammergau atop a mountain plateau and was one of the first religion strongholds to be captured and used as a barracks by the Nazi soldiers. It nestles in the German Alps and was a recognised seat of learning preparatory to higher education.

Thank God-- We Lost the War

Hattie C. Fleck

V-E Day in Germany

THIS is V-E Day. The last official word has been spoken, necessary to relieve the world from any doubt that the European slaughter has ended. The world is crying out in glee and happiness, and one hopes in THANKSGIVING to God; churches were filled in the great Metropolis of New York, some persons even kneeling openly in prayer to the edification of others who had not thought of prayer, for mere shouting and merrymaking. But to us who had heard similar shouts and merrymaking before, in the Armistice celebration of 1918, there was another note creeping into our consciousness, that of voices saying THANK GOD THAT WE LOST THE WAR! the voices of the older Catholic people of Germany.

When on visiting Germany, not long after the Armistice of 1918, we sympathized with certain groups whom we visited, parents and kin of some of our American neighbors, neighbors who had been American citizens for many years but whose people had been subjected to want and hunger, those same parents and friends of our neighbors, pleaded: "Do not sympathize with us. REJOICE with us... THANK GOD THAT WE LOST THE WAR!" According to them, had they won the World War I, they would have been deprived of saying a prayer in public, such as stopping at one of their numerous way shrines, the crucifixes, which contrary to much that we have read, had not been

removed from their outdoor moorings, and they could have had no open processions which were so dear to the hearts of Catholics in Bavaria and in the Rhineland. He who has never witnessed the Corpus Christi procession in Munich has missed a scene unforgettable, a procession in which the Blessed Sacrament is carried by the Cardinal through the entire city, draped in Papal and Bavarian flags. The Catholic University members act as the Guard of Honor, whose band furnishes the opening music when all the faithful, in line and on the streets swell the hymns to the Blessed Sacrament as the procession nears a given point.

In king-and-queen times the sovereigns walked directly before the Cardinal. The princes next and so down the line of royalty and nobility, all of which in Bavaria were practicing Catholics and the clergy and religious of every Order, and Nuns, and laity. Music and prayers were furnished by the schools and Gymnasiums all of which were under Catholic jurisdiction; the business of the day had been suspended, including the Post Office, and not a stamp or a loaf of bread could be purchased. The curtailment of numerous such glorious demonstrations during each year, was feared long before the final blow was struck, and although the LOSS of WORLD WAR I for a little while left the Catholics to carry on their traditional way, there soon crept in an edict here and there, with a VERBO-

TEN cleause, that eventually did reduce such demonstrations as the one described above, to the minimum.

On our latest visit to Germany, in 1938, just as War Clouds for WORLD WAR II were forming, on our return trip from Budapest where we had followed the International Eucharistic Congress, we were aware of the sad fact that processions so dear to the Bavarian Catholic heart were permitted ONLY within the confines of the church building. No more glorious MAY processions through the nearby wooded sections, where myriads of brilliant lights had been strung from tree to tree, and where people came during all the days of May to pray and sing in the open. The shrines, as remarked before, had NOT been removed, but open demonstrations had been discouraged, and so we saw an old man or woman, as it were "speaking" up toward a Madonna or Crucifix, doff a hat in reverence, or kiss the shrine reverently, and be on her or his way. For several years however, after the LOSING OF WORD WAR I this was not so, and it was because of this sustained privilege that people shouted THANK GOD WE LOST THE WAR. It was not long before we grasped the meaning of it all. Those of us who had made long visits to lovely Germany of the past, to lovely Bavaria and to the beautiful Rhine section, who had enjoyed religion and religious ceremonies in the fullest degree, before, were amazed when we had been reprimanded for using the lovely salutation of "GRUESS GOTT!" (Bless God) once the sweetest-sounding melody along the

streets of the Catholic countries. Every native greeted the person he met on the street with his hearty *Grüss Gott*, and if you did not reply he would answer himself, for no such greeting must remain unnoticed. Then we noticed the hideous extension of the right hand to the more hideous tune of HEIL HITLER, which the natives were "obliged" to use instead of GRUESS GOTT, but which they did not use as they once did their beautiful salutation... under only severe pressure.

During the presidency of Hindenburg, these things did not come to pass, and while he was alive, although they were being "cooked up" they were tolerated by those who knew that they eventually would be in power... HITLER AND HIS COHORTS. In churches, largely in the hands of the Benedictine and Jesuit Orders, priests made one's hair stand on end by their open admonitions to the people, and the Cardinal Archbishop, unafraid, often spoke from his and other pulpits, even when the Hitler party had taken over. The party was not yet strong enough... they were feeling their way around. But we did notice that on certain Sundays the Church news and bulletins were suspended, seized, to be candid, when and where there was a seeming good reason for the growing power to be annoyed by some item. This was as early as 1930. Things grew worse, and eventually, to be closer upon the heels of those marvelously brave priests and prelates the "GANG" finally built their BRAUN HAUS (their government house of brown stone) quite close to the



The Protestant Church of St. Matthew over a century old, was razed by the Nazis in 1938 to clear the bend in the square now recognized as a coming war measure. After this ten Catholic churches were to meet similar fate, but public opinion saved them at that time.

Cardinal's palace and near to the great Benedictine Basilica, the gift to Munich of the former King.

When the 16 martyrs...MARTYRS they are actually termed, men who died in the now famous Munich Putsch, were brought to "rest" in two great temples around which stood a perpetual sentry, in the loveliest section of Munich, the Catholics were angry, but it availed them nothing, once the "party" had been solidly established upon the death of the genial Hindenburg. Men did not dare pass without raising their hats to the MARTYRS, and any unfavorable remark was rebuffed with a sharp retort. Then came DAS HAUS DER KUNST, (the house of art) a huge granite pile devoted to modern art and only such truck as the "party" sanctioned. The City of Artists, Munich, the grand old Renaissance city, with its exquisite museum of Cribbs, its historical art galleries of old and modern art set in proper surroundings of parks, its medieval Cathedral, its ancient royal palace, its numerous churches some dating back to the eighth century, had been desecrated by such modern trash for which the NEW government had pulled down blocks and blocks of refined dwellings and eradicated the fine old handwrought iron gateways and fountains, gifts of the kings who did much to beautify Munich. Not in the least was it ONLY because of their desire to modernize OLD MUENCHEN that they did this; that was the excuse they gave to objectors; but they wished to eradicate every solitary sign of the past of which Munich had been so proud and so attractive to the outer world. They knew the youth would forget if no traces were left; therefore they began by pulling down the churches. First the Synagogue, the only one in Catholic Munich was razed. Then, and this writer witnessed the scene, the one OLD Protestant Church of Saint Matthew, which occupied a prominent square, was doomed to die an ignominious death. One morning a great crowd eagerly had gathered, and the "hangman's noose" was thrown over the venerable steeple of the famous old church, and like so many demons, the workers tugged at it. Finally the steeple groaned a little, then sighed louder, and eventually crashed under the stout ropes with a resounding noise of falling dried mortar and old bricks. But the shout of the people is what remains in the ears of the spectator, a shout of indignation! But it was not strong enough to stop and discourage the tuggers at the ends of the ropes. The old bell was removed...probably becoming a lethal instrument like nearly all the church bells of Germany. Next the Catholic churches were slated for demolition...ten of them. The synagogue and the Church of Saint

Matthew were but "feelers" and while the anger of the people did not prevent their destruction, it did manifest to the PAGAN HORDE that objections ran high, and that the Catholics stood prepared and defiant to have their churches razed "over their dead bodies," and NOT ONE was touched. The grand old church of St. Peter, and that of the Holy Spirit were among the condemned ten, but in defiance, there was one of the most beautiful services to The Sacred Heart in the latter church, that one can imagine. Men sang from their souls as one heard only in Catholic Bavaria, the Tyrol and the Rhineland churches. The edifice was packed, people standing elbow to elbow and singing the lovely German Sacred Heart and Blessed Sacrament hymns. THE CHURCHES WERE NOT PULLED DOWN, but since then it is probable that they met a fate which the average cowed and frightened citizen could no longer prevent.

But it came to pass eventually, that even though they lost World War I, and sang their Te Deums in thanksgiving, that they were plunged into the deepest sort of anti-religious trickery when the Youth Movement which promised so much, had ruined everything that the people cherished...the home-and-religious life of the community. Children who once had crowded the churches and whose choirs were brought up to a standard of near-perfection, had been snatched away from home and church, from Friday until Sunday night, given "freedom of imagination and action" under the "protection" of the party leaders, in open-air camps. In the beginning the parents could and did resist, but the movement grew, and older children prevailed upon the younger, and eventually parents were threatened with arrest and with the threats of their own children, who had been educated to believe that it was their SACRED DUTY to report the obstinate parents. The once crowded childrens' Masses, were offered with empty pews and the angelic choirs were heard no more. Instead, one heard loud shouting in the streets as the camps were dismissed and the youngsters were led back with jubilation each Sunday night. At the risk of their lives, priests followed their flocks to the edge of the camps to at least say Mass for them, but they met with worse than they anticipated...some with death, others with concentration camps while others suffered the foulest accusations, all of which they willingly suffered if they had but helped even a little. Then came the time when even their efforts had cooled...simply NO USE! All during this time preparations were under way for the world conflict. People were made to believe that perhaps they wronged their leaders. Work was plentiful.

Out of the chaos of the depression Germany emerged more beautiful than before. Streets were newly paved; narrow passages and roads widened; encumbering buildings were torn away.

Old pavements which were remnants of the Roman occupation had been transformed into modern asphalt streets, less hard on the feet than the Roman cobbles. In Cologne, there was talk of removing a few churches that stood at peculiar angles in the way of straightening certain streets ... but again the people were indignant, and they remained. Now it is evident that these stood in the way of marching armies ... even as the Roman cobbles were. Yet they are no more, according to accounts of today. Among these were the tomb of St. Albert the Great, the teacher of St. Thomas Aquinas; St. Ursula's, the tomb of St. Ursula, patroness of Cologne; the Church of the Minorites, in which lay Father Kolping, ready for canonization and the famous scholar, Duns Scotus, to mention only a few. And in this manner some of the people began to wonder whether they were not too prejudiced, as they saw some of the "beautifying" work going on, which spelled prosperity, but which they could not foresee as false prosperity. The climb of Nazism was quite gradual to all save the Clergy, who saw behind the curtain, and who had brought down particular hatred upon their heads accordingly. When the fury broke they were the first to suffer. Monasteries and convents were sacked and the members expelled with little or nothing to call their own. Sent into camps, factories or into front lines, later, their homes were fast becoming barracks, and while they naturally fought for the country that was HOME to them, they fought two wars, one with the sword ... regimented ... the other with their prayers that they might be relieved from the curse of the prevailing government.

As Americans, who after 1918 witnessed similar, but by far not so disastrous an aftermath, the TWOFOLD TE DEUM rings in our ears ... for the close of the war, and for the relief of the CATHOLICS from the TRYANNY OF NAZISM, meaning from the tyranny of the anti-religious gangsters who died of their own importance and of the power-drunk shortsightedness. Now the Passion Play which had suffered at times and could not be played at scheduled intervals, in other wars as well as in this, will possibly not undergo RE-WRITING, as was threatened. Rather than submit to the rewrite of the sacred text, for an infidel modernistic version as was suggested, the players of Oberram-mergau folded up their manuscripts and hid them. The beautiful Christmas hymn of Silent Night, on

the VERBOTEN list, when people defied the edict and sang it in spite of threats, was to be re-written, leaving the tune, but "modernizing" the words, worth nothing short of contempt and which no Bavarian Catholic would sing. Catholics throughout Germany, of the same mind, defied the rule, and nothing further had been done. Yes, there were many instances of cowardice in items that had to do directly with the people, where majorities were still able to show their teeth to the aggressor, and they withdrew leaving WELL ENOUGH ALONE.

According to many writers, and quite contrary to much hatred that has been caused to spread because of national prejudice or even religious antagonism, the faith in Germany is still very strong and it will not be long, laws and permits granting, before their houses of worship and their Christian schools will again be rebuilt. The elders, once the younger generation has been "purged" (this time of Nazism) will have retained enough of the old faith to rekindle the ashes in the hearts of their children, who through false promises and erroneous ideals were plunged into the disgrace that hangs over the once respected nation. "IF THOU WILT FALL DOWN AND ADORE ME" was taken too seriously by the youth, the youth who was first sped on to their doom through the KRAFT DURCH FREUDE, a movement which means "Strength through Joy" which the young Germany was offered and gladly accepted, the Nazis' first bait of free travel through their own Germany and through other countries. This was one of the "wisest" moves of the now fallen government, knowing the average German's love of travel. First trips through their own country to show them the beauty of it, and then abroad, to show them by comparison what they had to be proud of and grateful for, and it worked like magic. To young, and even to older people, who had not an opportunity to go far from home, such an offer was simply maddening, and everyone reached out for a chance at travel. That was one of the cleverest moves of all the Nazi regime. It filled the people with trust, and with temporary contempt for everything that was waged against the government, which might account for much of the misunderstanding that later came between the faithful and the clergy, who saw the danger of the maneuver.

Whatever the result, whatever the divided opinions, whatever the developments, one thing is certain, that in the hearts of German "good" Catholics, there is a song of praise, A TE DEUM LAUDAMUS that they LOST THIS WAR.



LITTLE QUEEN

Written

by

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by

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CONCLUDED

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

I RECEIVED the Last Sacraments on July 30. By now everyone was convinced that death would be only a matter of hours, for I was suffering intensely. Every breath was a torment. I could scarcely bear the pain, even though faith told me that many poor sinners were being helped because I was offering this pain for them.

"But in the end Sister Therese will have an easy death," said one of the nuns. "Wait and see. It will be just as though she fell asleep."

I did not agree. To spare my sisters sorrow, I would have been glad to have an easy death, but always the thought was present that my own wishes did not matter. Long ago I had asked God to take away my will and let only His Will be manifest in me. Besides, there was the death of Christ on the Cross. Had it been beautiful, or easy? No—it had been bloody and agonizing. For the sake of sinners, the Heavenly Father had allowed His Son to undergo the most dreadful sufferings. Upheld by grace, I now would try to imitate Christ to the last.

Despite everyone's opinion, I still had several more weeks to live. On August 1 Pauline told me once more how pleased she was with my book. It was truly *The Story of a Soul*. Later on she hoped to have it read to the community, and also published. Perhaps some of the Sisters would object

to my poor little words being given such prominence, but she felt that should not matter. The whole world ought to know about my Little Way.

As she was speaking, something prompted me to offer this advice:

"My Mother, after my death the manuscript should not be spoken of to anyone until it is published. If you do otherwise, or if you delay the publication, the Devil will set many snares for you in order to hinder God's work... a work that is very important..."

Yes, I was convinced that my book was a good one. This was not due to any merit on my part but solely to the assistance which the Heavenly Father had given me. He had inspired me to write well of His goodness and mercy because He wished that souls everywhere should love Him as I loved Him. They were not to be afraid of His Will.

Presently I reflected upon a statement made by one of the Sisters. She had said that it was easy for me to have confidence in God because I had never offended Him by mortal sin. But what about others, people living in the world who had committed all manner of serious offenses? Surely it would be hard for them to be as little children, to fly to the arms of the Heavenly Father in complete confidence that He would forgive them? I had replied to her question with these words, inserting them later in the story of my life:

"I know that I should lose nothing of my confidence even if I had on my conscience every crime that could be committed. Heart-broken with repentance, I would throw myself into the arms of my Saviour. I know that He loves the Prodigal Son; I have heard His words to Saint Mary Magdalen. . . . No one could make me fear, for I know what to believe concerning His love and His mercy. I know that all that multitude of sins would disappear in an instant, as a drop of water cast into a flaming furnace."

"These words and all the other words I have written are true!" I told myself happily. "Dear God, thank You for helping me to write them."

For several months I had not been able to be with the novices. The Prioress had declared that they were not to bother me with their troubles and doubts, for I was not strong enough to speak more than was necessary. But one August day a little group was allowed to come to the Infirmary. For the time being I was not suffering quite as much as usual. Possibly one visit from my young guests would not hurt me.

The young Sisters gathered about my bed, their eyes wide with sympathy. What a change sickness had wrought in Sister Therese of the Child Jesus! Finally one of them spoke:

"You are always seeking to be like a little child," she said, "but won't you tell us what must be done to obtain Eternal Life?"

I smiled at the question. When a person gives up his pride, when he becomes a little child in spirit, he has taken the most important step toward obtaining Eternal Life. After all I had told them, why didn't the novices understand that *childhood* and *Heaven* go together? But I remained calm, and tried to give one more explanation of my Little Way.

"'Remaining little' means that we recognize our nothingness," I said, "that we await everything from the goodness of God, as a little child expects everything from its father, that we are not anxious about anything and that we do not think about amassing spiritual riches. Even among the poor, a child receives what is necessary while he is still small; once he is grown up, his father will no longer help him, but tells him to work and support himself. It was to avoid hearing this that I have never wished to grow up, for I feel incapable of earning my livelihood, which is Eternal Life. That is why I have remained little; my only care has been to gather flowers of love and sacrifice and to offer them to God for His good pleasure."

The novices were silent for a moment. Then one remarked a bit doubtfully that many people might misunderstand my words. To become a little child in spirit, to put oneself in the arms of the Heavenly Father and seek everything from Him—why, surely there is an element of laziness in this!

"Oh, no!" I hastened. "When you are in the arms of the Heavenly Father, you are really in a watch tower. You can see many new and wonderful ways of pleasing Him. Ever since I placed myself there, I have been like a watchman on the lookout for the enemy from the highest turret of a fortified castle; nothing escapes my vigilance. . . . I am often surprised at my own clear-sightedness."

Then I gave one more definition of holiness:

"Sanctity does not consist in the practice of certain exercises of piety, but in a disposition of the heart which makes us humble and little in the arms of God, conscious of our weakness, but confiding—unhesitatingly—in His Fatherly Goodness."

As the days passed, I became steadily weaker. Celine, now Sister Genevieve of the Holy Face, had been appointed Assistant Infirmary and spent her nights in a cell adjoining the Infirmary. She did everything to help me, and I was glad to have her near, but I was also grieved because I knew that my coughing spells disturbed her. Presently I asked the Blessed Virgin to let these spells occur in the daytime only, so that Celine might be able to get her much needed rest.

"But if you do not hear me, I shall love you still more," I said.

The Devil was very busy these days, and soon the temptations against faith were even worse than before. One day, as I lay gazing out of the window at the beautiful summer sky, one of the Sisters made an effort to comfort me.

"Soon you will be up there, beyond that blue sky," she said.

I smiled, but later I confessed to Pauline that the Sister's words had brought me no cheer. The sky was beautiful, yes, but somehow I could not see beyond it. Only the lovely color caught my eye. Every day Heaven seemed to be more and more closed to me.

As August gave place to September, additional temptations came my way. One night they were almost too much to bear, and I begged the Infirmary to sprinkle Holy Water on my bed.

"I do not see the Devil, but I feel his presence!" I cried. "He is tormenting me! He holds me with an iron hand! He prevents me from getting the slightest relief! He increases my pain in order to lead me to despair. . . ."

Quickly the Infirmarian brought the Holy Water and sprinkled it generously about the bed. She also lighted a blessed candle.

"Pray," she urged gently. "Have confidence."

"Oh, Sister, I cannot pray! I can only look at the Blessed Virgin and say 'Jesus'! I know I do not suffer for myself but for another soul... and the Devil is so displeased!"

The Infirmarian was much impressed with these words, and remained with me for several minutes. To the best of my ability I tried to tell her how necessary it is to pray for the dying. Few people realize how furiously the Devil fights to drag souls to Hell, not only during life but most especially at the hour of death. He knows that now his last chance has come, and so he tries his best to sow discouragement in the human heart. Past sins, long ago forgiven, are dragged forth to stand in a new and ugly light. God is shown as a Creator Who cannot abide the slightest imperfection. He is shown as a God of Justice, and the poor sufferer trembles at the thought of what awaits him. All these things are readily accomplished because the Devil has enormous powers. He is really an angel, with an angel's keen intelligence, and he well knows how to frighten a weak human being.

Even as I reflected upon this, and struggled hard not to give way before the Devil's onslaughts, a gentle peace suddenly flooded my soul. I knew once more that God may be a God of Justice but He is also a God of Mercy. The blessing of His Holy Church was in the candle burning beside my bed, in the Holy Water that had been sprinkled about me. The Devil knew this, too, and had fled from the Strength that must always be greater than his.

On September 14 someone brought me a rose. I was holding my crucifix at the time, and as a mark of love for Our Lord I touched each of the Five Wounds with the fragrant petals. Later some of these petals fell to the floor. Celine would have swept them up and thrown them away, but suddenly I astonished her with these words:

"Gather up these petals, but do not lose one of them. Later on, they will enable you to give pleasure."

Pauline and Marie were present, and their eyes filled with wonder at my statement. What did I mean?

I knew what I meant. Some day many people were going to read my book, *The Story of a Soul*, and see God in a new light. They would discover that He was not only their Judge but their Father, and thousands would forget their fear of Him, of His Will in their regard. They would joyfully set

about their most important task, that of achieving holiness, by becoming as little children. Because I, poor and weak though I was, had been chosen to teach souls that the surest way to Heaven is the Little Way, these rose petals which I had touched would be treated as very precious objects.

Two weeks later I was still alive, and still suffering in mind and body. But on September 29, about nine o'clock in the evening, there came a sign which seemed to indicate that my death was now very close at hand. Celine was with me when a turtle dove appeared from out the autumn twilight and perched on the window sill near my bed. It stayed there for several minutes, cooing gently. As we watched, this unexpected little visitor, those beautiful lines from the Canticle of Canticles flashed through our minds:

"Behold, my Beloved speaketh to me. Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come. For winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land, the time of pruning is come. The voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig tree hath put forth her green figs, the vines in flower yield their sweet smell. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come..."

Yes—Christ was inviting me, a little one of His Church, to the never-ending springtime which is Heaven!

The suffering was not quite over, however. All that night and all the next day, September 30, I gasped and struggled for breath. I was consumed with fever. Never had I thought it possible to suffer so much, never, never! The only explanation was that I had made myself a victim for others, and God was accepting the offering in its entirety.

My sisters scarcely left my side, or Mother Mary Gonzaga. About three o'clock in the afternoon the suffering became so intense that I felt I could not bear it. I extended my arms in the form of a cross and looked beseechingly at the Prioress.

"Oh, my Mother! Present me to the Blessed Virgin without delay! Prepare me to die well!"

The Prioress soothed me as best she could, then showed me a little image of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. She reminded me that I had always understood and practised humility, and that God is merciful toward those who have made themselves small.

There was real comfort in these words. Yes, I had never sought anything but the truth. From childhood I had understood humility of heart. Besides, was it not written in Psalm 75 that at the end of the world the Lord will arise to save the

meek and humble of the earth? It was not written that He should come to *judge*, but to *save*.

With a great effort I let Mother Mary Gonzaga understand that I was not afraid of God, or of what He had in store for me. The temptations against faith were still present, but I was fighting them with every ounce of my strength.

"I do not repent of having surrendered myself to Love," I said.

The hours passed, and I lingered on. Some minutes after seven o'clock the Prioress dismissed most of the Sisters who had been praying about my bed. Hearing their departure, I looked up.

"Mother, am I not going to die?"

"Yes, my child. But perhaps the good God wishes to prolong your suffering for a few hours..."

I sighed, and clutched my crucifix. "Well, then, let it be so. I would not want to suffer less."

Slowly the seconds ticked away. By now I could scarcely breathe. Suddenly I looked once more on the crucifix. Had the time finally come for me to offer my last prayer on earth? Yes, I told myself. It has come, and with all my strength I gasped out the simple words:

"Oh, I love Him! My God... I... love... You!"

Then I closed my eyes, and my head fell back against the pillow.

Instantly Mother Mary Gonzaga was convinced that I was dead, and ordered the bell rung to call the community to my side. But when the Sisters reached the Infirmary, they found that I was still

alive. Quietly they knelt about me, praying, praying, praying. Then everyone present witnessed a most extraordinary sight. Suddenly I had opened my eyes, had raised myself in bed, and now was gazing joyfully at a point a little above the Blessed Virgin's statue.

"What is it?" they wondered silently. "Sister Therese doesn't look tired and sick any more. She looks positively beautiful!"

Yes, the pain and suffering were over now, and God was granting me a glimpse of Heaven. The vision was so full of glory, so wonderful, that I could not help reflecting it in my own poor body. For almost a minute I gazed at the beautiful sight, utterly unable to speak. Then the summons came. God was satisfied with the little servant who had labored for Him on this earth for twenty-four years and nine months. Now her reward was at hand.

As my head fell back a second time on the pillow, the nuns redoubled their prayers. Sister Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face was dead!

Dead? Oh, no! I was just starting to live. Had I not been inspired to say, many weeks before, that I WOULD SPEND MY HEAVEN IN DOING GOOD UPON EARTH? Yes—and now the time had come. It was September 30, 1897, but until the end of the world I would work for souls. I would come down to them when they called upon me. And *The Story of a Soul*, my book, would carry the happy message of my Little Way to every corner of the earth!

THE END



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Of Such is the Kingdom

By Quentin Morrow Phillip

VIEWED from the train the town of Antioch appeared smaller and dirtier than most of the towns in that part of the State; and Mr. Hirschfield, as he scanned the station where he would have to wait over between trains, wished that his daughter and son-in-law had been wiser in their selection of railroads. He followed them obediently, getting up from his seat at the very last minute; and when his bags were deposited on the station platform, he trudged wearily to the first convenient bench and wondered how much farther it was to Sarasota, Florida, where he was to obtain treatment from a famous physician skilled in rheumatic ills. The two nights and a day on the train sapped whatever remaining strength he had; but for the indomitable will that had carried him along this far, he would have collapsed twenty stations back and been grateful to lie down in a pine box.

He watched with indifference the anxiety and nervousness of his daughter, the business-like efficiency of his son-in-law who was dispatching a wire from the telegrapher's office and asking questions of the clerk behind the ticket desk. They meant well, of course, dragging him clear across the country to relieve him of ailments that had semi-invalidated him in his advancing old age; but on the other hand he suspected they were going to Florida for their own sakes as well as his. He did not like his son-in-law any too well, and his daughter had not been the same to him since her marriage as she was when she depended on him for the necessities and luxuries of life. Sometimes, he thought, they bore with him only because he must die some day and leave them a little in his will.

Ah well, he was an old man, and his grumbling was at the stage where it no longer bore fruit. They would leave him alone to watch their bags and his, go somewhere in the town to eat or to enjoy themselves while they waited for the train that would take them on their last lap to Florida, and he would sit there on the platform of a deserted station, twiddling his thumbs, enduring as best he could the pain in his legs.

"Now you stay right here until we come back," his daughter told him as she gave her cheeks a last flip of the powder puff and sauntered off on the arm of her husband.

Where did she think he could go? The way his legs hurt him this morning, he was fortunate that he had been able to walk from the track to the bench; he would be more fortunate if he were able to walk to the newsstand inside the station and buy a paper to read while he waited. Foolish woman. Thirty years ago he had to tell her that when he took her anywhere. Alas, children will not stay children.

The newsstand inside the station beckoned him irresistably the longer he looked at it from his solitary post on the platform. Clutching the cane that was his ever-present companion, he straightened his swollen knees and propelled himself forward with that rigid and uncertain motion that weakened his heart with every step. It was harder going than any of the Rockies he had climbed in his youth.

"Can I help you, mister?"

He looked around and down into the face of a boy who could not be more than ten years old. A clean, freckle-faced boy with a frank smile and eyes that laughed.

"Why, I guess you can, son," he said. "You would do me a big favor if you would go in there and buy me a paper and some cigars."

"Any special paper, sir? We have them from all over. And what kind of cigars do you smoke?"

"Any paper will do. And any kind of cigars, if they are good. Something three for a half dollar."

He staggered back to the bench, where he was not conscious of his pain while he watched the boy make his purchases for him. When the boy returned, he tipped him generously, and thought that would be the end of their brief acquaintance. But the youngster sat down beside him, stared at his cane and at his feet encased in oversized bedroom slippers.

"Gee, you can't walk, can you?" said the boy, a blend of pity and sympathy in his high soprano voice.

Mr. Hirschfield feigned a smile. "Well, sometimes I can, but most of the time I can't," he answered, the front of his eyes on the paper in his hands and the corner of them on the sandy head at his elbow. "Rheumatism, son. And complications. It crippled me. Hope that you never get it. It's awful to have."

"My pop used to have it," said the boy, very earnestly. "He couldn't walk at all. He couldn't even dress himself. My big brother had to do that for him. But he's all right now. He plays ball with us kids, and you'd never think he was crippled."

"Your father?" Mr. Hirschfield put his paper down on the baggage that formed a mound at the end of the bench, squared his attention on the face that was without guile. "Are you certain he had rheumatism?"

"Yes, sir. Everybody in town knows what he had."

"Who is your father? What is your name?"

"Billy. Billy Lansing. I do chores around the station here every morning before school. Dad's working on the farm we own the other side of town. It's that way, sir. Are you going to be here very long?"

"Until eleven o'clock, I understand." Mr. Hirschfield suffered himself to hope he would see Mr. Lansing before then, and learn from him the secret of his cure. "They tell me this is a junction point. We are to get the eastbound train here. Aren't you due in school now? It must be going on nine o'clock."

"Today is Saturday. We don't have school on Saturday." The inflection in the boy's voice was one of surprise that anyone should not know what time of the week it was. "I'm going to Church, though. We have Mass at nine o'clock."

"Church? On Saturday?" Mr. Hirschfield felt a guilt of something nameless. "Oh, you're Catholic."

"Aren't you?" Again the inflection. "Everybody is here, except Mr. Rogers who has the barber shop on Vine Street; and he doesn't go to church because he is a Mason. Are you a Mason?"

"No, son. A man with my name can never be a Mason." Mr. Hirschfield said that with a painful remembrance of unpleasantness in the past. He pulled his watch out of a vest pocket. "Pshaw, it's only eight-thirty," he sighed. "My, how time drags."

"Wouldn't you want to go to Mass with me?" Billy had got up and stood by the pile of baggage. "It's only two blocks to our church. You can see the steeple, if you stand up. It's not a big church, but everybody goes there. You ought to go. You have lots of time. Besides, you could walk again if you went there. I mean, you could walk all the time."

"Now wait, son, you're way ahead of me." Mr. Hirschfield removed his hat, urged Billy to sit down beside him again. "You say I could walk again? Why?"

"Because our Lord would cure you." The boy was as serious as the old man. "That's what He did to my pop."

"Now, now, wait a minute, wait a minute." Mr. Hirschfield smiled a condescending smile, though a chilly sweat sprang from his bosom. "Do you mean that that was a miracle? Is this church a shrine?"

"A shrine? No, it's only St. Giles Church. Haven't you ever been in Church?" The expression of puzzlement clouded the young face.

"No, son, never. In a synagogue often, but never in a church." The old man crossed his knees to relieve the stricture in the muscles of his right leg; he wetted his lips with his tongue, for they were peculiarly dry. "You've never been in a synagogue, have you?"

"I don't know what that is," said Billy.

"Well, it's a temple of worship," said Mr. Hirschfield, "something on the order of your church. We pray, and we sing, and we wait for the Messiah." His mouth curved to the sardonic thought that passed through his mind. He was an indifferent believer.

"The Messiah is our Lord," said the boy, beaming with a remembered lesson. "Didn't you know that? It's in our catechism. And when our Lord—"

"We're getting away from things," said Mr. Hirschfield. "I asked you if your church was a shrine, because I had read about Catholic shrines where miracles supposedly happened. You tell me it is not a shrine. How did your father get cured?"

"Oh, he went to Mass one day, and he prayed real hard." Billy was matter-of-fact in his recitation of details. When he concluded, Mr. Hirschfield's watch indicated the hour to be a quarter of nine, which caused him to get up once more and be ready for a quick departure.

"That's how it was?" asked Mr. Hirschfield. "Are you certain there wasn't anything else behind it, some doctor, some medicine, some operation?"

"I don't think so," said the boy. "We couldn't afford doctors. We always go to our Lord when we want something. That's what you should do. Won't you go with me? If we leave right away—"

"Well, I don't suppose harm can come of it," said the old man. "At least it will help to pass the time. Too, I've always wanted to see the inside of a Catholic church. Help me up, will you. That's a good boy. Now which way is it we go?"

"This way, sir."

They walked slowly at first; but after the kinks and knots in Mr. Hirschfield's knees and legs had loosened, they were able to accelerate their pace, and they arrived at the church just as the priest and the acolytes started the prayers at the foot of the altar.

There were fewer than a hundred people in the church, but Mr. Hirschfield thought them an extraordinary crowd for a weekday service. Until the Consecration, he spent most of the time gawking and behaving like a tourist in a museum. At the Consecration, however, Billy, in a loud whisper, told him to get down on his knees and pray hard for what he wanted. He objected to that, not with any idea of irreverence, but because his knees would not bend that way. He knew that if he ever got down to the floor, it would require the help of a man to raise him up again; and how embarrassing that would be for him, a stranger in a strange church.

"I can't do it," he whispered back.

"You can," Billy returned. "Kneel. Kneel. Pray! It's our Lord coming down on the altar. Don't be afraid. He will help you."

"All right, on your responsibility," said Mr. Hirschfield, yielding. But, wonder of wonders, his knees bent without causing him the least pain. A fearful comprehension thrallied him. "Messiah!" he groaned, "Messiah!"

"You can sit down again," Billy whispered to him after the most solemn part of the Mass.

Mr. Hirschfield did not hear him, would not have heard an organ had one been playing. The soul of him was with the God on the altar; when he did finally raise his head, his eyes were red, his cheeks wet.

When the Mass was over and the people gone, Mr. Hirschfield pulled up his trouser legs and looked dumbfounded at what he knew to be a fact when he had knelt down. The swelling in his knees and legs had disappeared, and his feet, shrunken to normal size, literally swam in the slippers he wore.

"See, didn't I tell you?" Billy repeated over and

over. "Now you can walk like me."

"Yes, I can," Mr. Hirschfield was able to say at last. "I can, son." He bowed toward the altar. "Messiah . . . Christus . . . merciful God, I adore You."

They walked back arm in arm to the railroad station, pausing enroute for an ice cream soda. Every dozen paces or so Mr. Hirschfield would kick out his legs; and the people on the street seeing his merry little chase for his slippers, stopped and shook their heads and muttered to one another that it was a fine time of the day for an old man to be drunk. But neither he nor Billy was depressed by their mutterings; they had a high time together.

Mr. Hirschfield's daughter and her husband were on the station platform when he and Billy got there. The woman glowered with anger, and the man repressed with difficulty the bad words that were on the tip of his tongue.

"Can't I ever trust you?" said the woman. "Not for one hour can I leave you alone. Suppose someone had stolen our bags?"

"This for your bags!" Mr. Hirschfield snapped his fingers. "This for Florida!" He double-snapped them. "I'm going back home on the next train." He danced a jig that rolled Billy in laughter.

His daughter's eyes popped. Her husband's did a complete somersault in their orbits.

"Papa, are you crazy?" cried the woman. "Do you want to kill yourself? Sit down this instant!"

"He's a faker," said her husband. "I always believed he was. There's nothing really wrong with him. But he'll not change our plans. We're going to Florida—"

"Perhaps you are, but I'm not," Mr. Hirschfield interjected. "I'm going back home on the next train."

"Oh no you're not," said his daughter.

"Oh yes I am," he answered. "You can go to Florida without me. That was your first plan, anyway."

"Fine, then we'll go to Florida without you," said his son-in-law, sputtering his anger.

"On second thought," said Mr. Hirschfield, looking at Billy, "I think I'll stay right here. It's a nice little town, and it has the nicest little church—"

"The what?" demanded his son-in-law.

"Church," said Mr. Hirschfield. "You'd love it, if you knew what is in it. Yes, I think I'll stay here. Come on, Billy, we have to find a hotel for me."

"We have only one," said the boy. "It's right over there, across the street. Shall I carry your bags?"

Why don't you

Get acquainted on earth with your brothers and sisters
In heaven — the SAINTS!



Listen to Blessed Imelda:

"In the mute Bleeding Heart in your garden
You must see me, Imelda, instead;
For, one day when the Host was seen hovering
As a dove, poised in flight, over my head,—
The pure rapture that Jesus was in me
Broke my heart—'Jesus . . . mine!' . . . I was dead."

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